

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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**B R O A D W A Y
T R A N S L A T I O N S**

*" Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety."*



PHILIPPE DE MORNAY, SIEUR DU PLESSIS MARLY

H.F.D.
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Broadway Translations

A
HUGUENOT FAMILY
IN THE XVI CENTURY

THE MEMOIRS OF
PHILIPPE DU MORNAY

Sœur du Plessis Marly

WRITTEN BY HIS WIFE

[Mornay, Charlotte Arbaleste de]

Translated by
LUCY CRUMP

With an Introduction

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MEMOIR OF PHILIPPE DE MORNAY SIEUR DU PLESSIS MARLY

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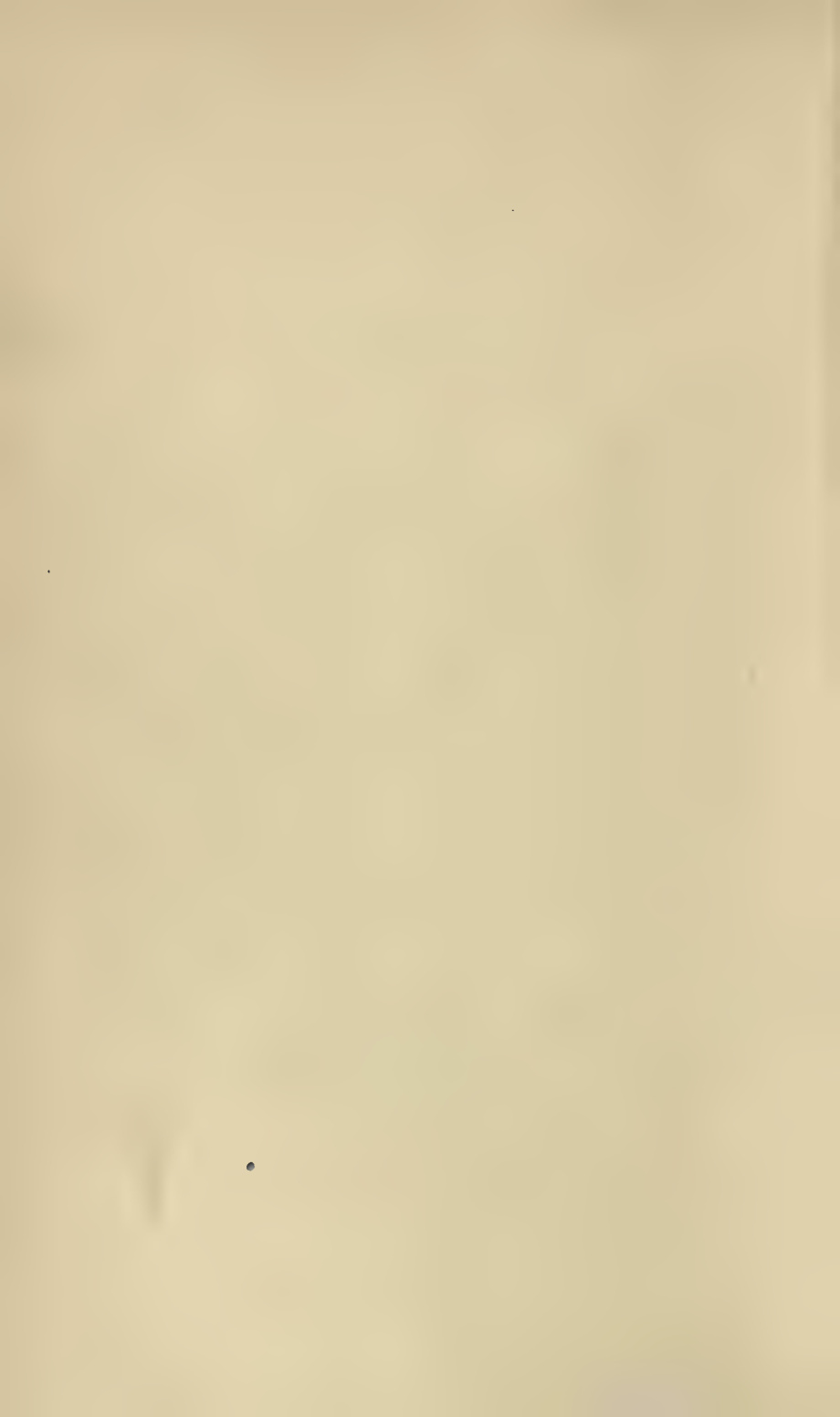
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FOREWORD

MY hope in offering an English version of this memoir is that it may find a welcome among those to whom a long gone past can still appeal as a living present. In his own day du Plessis' writings had a wide popularity in English translations; his wife's book has waited for over three hundred years, and yet her writing has a more enduring human interest. But even a complete French edition of the memoirs, letters and state papers of du Plessis was not published before 1824. In 1868 a new and carefully-revised text of the memoir, including a few unpublished family letters and papers, was edited by Mme de Witt for the Société de l'Histoire de France, and my translation has been made from this latter text. The student must still go to the original for he will not find the whole book here, as written by Mlle du Plessis. Up to the year 1590 nothing has been omitted. After that date I have only translated that portion which concerns the de Mornay family, since my object is to reconstruct the history of a family rather than to elucidate the tangle of political and huguenot events after the cessation of civil war.



INTRODUCTION

FRANCE IN DU PLESSIS MORNAY'S BOYHOOD

THE memoirs of Philippe de Mornay, generally known as M. du Plessis Marly from the name of his estate, take their place as one among the scores of memoirs in which the history and the literature of France are so extraordinarily rich. The du Plessis memoirs possess, however, a special quality of their own. They are not, as so many are, written to glorify their writer's own career in war or court, nor to justify or advocate some special policy; they are not, as others, dry records of administrative achievements, nor highly coloured romances in whose trustworthiness it is impossible to believe. The times described are times of extreme disturbance; the writer is a woman of great ability and character, yet they are not written mainly either as a history of the times nor for the glorification of the writer. The book is the story of a family in which children, and kinsfolk and friends all have their place, although always Philippe, *Sieur du Plessis Marly*, the author's husband, remains the idolized hero of the story. The fact that this is so entirely a family record, at least for the first forty years, gives a zest to the writer's descriptions, an intimacy, a poignancy rarely met elsewhere. School days and early travels through Europe; escapes from the St Bartholomew massacre; capture by pirates; life in Sedan, England, the Low Countries and in the ever shifting court of Navarre; a long quarrel with puritanical ministers over the way court ladies should dress their hair; an attempted assassination and the prolonged and curious procedure by

which the assailant and his victim were finally reconciled ; literary work ; sieges and battles, and finally all the small stray details of family life which crop up from time to time are all set down, with a restraint and sobriety reminiscent of Scotland rather than France, for the edification of the writer's son. The mingling of all these things makes of these memoirs a book apart.

Those who read them in the present day could often wish for more details, for a fuller mention of the little things which more than anything else transform the past into the present. But the son, for whose sake the story was chiefly written, knew all these common things for himself. He had been born in the midst of civil war and grew up in a clash and turmoil which wellnigh led to the very disintegration of the kingdom of France ; but through the fury of public affairs all the ordinary things went on, all the daily routine of living, and the only regret is that the writer of the memoirs thought these homely matters so little worth relating. Thus many things remain obscure for present-day readers which were too obvious to need a mention nearly four hundred years ago, and it is not only the language, with its page-long sentences and use of now obsolete words, which may present difficulties to them. Something more than translation is needed for those who have made no special study of the time, some slight aid to render the memoirs as vivid in modern days as they were to those who had lived through the scenes they describe.

Philippe de Mornay, Sieur du Plessis Marly was born in 1549 and died in 1623. His memoirs cover the time from his birth to the year 1600. The writer, his wife, died in 1606 ; the son, for whom she wrote, was killed in the Low Countries in 1605 ; their daughters were married and M. du Plessis' last years were passed in a retirement in strange contrast to the incessant turmoil of his youth and middle life. He was born in an age when his father dared not read a lutheran book for fear " of the fires of persecution then alight in France " ; he died in one

when greater religious freedom was enjoyed in France than was allowed in any other European country, whether Catholic or Protestant. The long struggle between France and the Empire came to an end in Philippe's early childhood but it left the country full of unrest and with the seeds of the coming troubles already sown. For years the wars in Italy had found congenial employment for the nobles and now when they were over crowds of men, some few enriched in the wars but many more hopelessly impoverished, some few with minds and interests enlarged and educated by the Italian magic, but many more brutalized and corrupted by battlefield and camp, returned to scatter over the country places of France. But not only the wars, and still more the end of the wars, brought unrest. Throughout du Plessis' childhood the struggle of faiths was also shaping and the long period of civil war becoming more and more hopelessly inevitable. And, no less than France, all Europe was in a ferment, and little peace and still less freedom was to be found in any land. Philippe was a true child of the French reformation, and this is all the truer since neither of his parents openly professed the reformed faith at the time of his birth. In its early manifestations the reformation in France had little to do with new creeds and new forms of church government. It grew naturally out of the Renaissance and found its origin in the new learning and liberal thought of the humanists. Erasmus rather than Luther influenced the early beginnings. Strictly Catholic reformers such as Briçonnet, bishop of Meaux, and the learned Lefevre d'Etaples were among the earliest forerunners of the French movement towards Protestantism although they themselves always maintained their orthodoxy. Briçonnet had formed part of the little court kept by Marguerite d'Angoulême, sister of François I, where culture and piety flourished, where preachers boldly preached reform of the church, where poets made verses and Marguerite tales all in an exquisite atmosphere of piety, sentiment

and gaiety. But this first groping after reform in the midst of real learning and genuine piety, mingled with the charm of a small renaissance court, had a profound effect on the course of the general reformation in France. To this may be traced the undoubted fact that the movement spread first among the nobles, and more especially among the women of their class. There is no more striking feature of the French movement towards protestantism than the part that well-born women played in it. During the many years of war women were often left alone to act as the head of the household and this gave them more freedom to think and act for themselves, just as the greater responsibilities thrown upon them in the long absences of their menfolk tended to develop them intellectually. But the fact that the very heart of the movement was herself a woman, a king's sister and queen of Navarre naturally attracted other women to the opinions she professed in so alluring a manner. Certain it is that from the very beginning women took a large part in the early movement towards a purified Catholicism, as well as in the later adoption of the sterner Calvinist creed; few among them were more notable exponents of this truth than the writer of the Mornay memoirs. These women were often far better educated than their husbands and sons, who had often gone to the Italian wars when scarcely more than boys, and the labours of reformers like the bishop of Meaux and the men he called to the work of regenerating his neglected diocese specially appealed to such. There was no harsh break with the old tradition, and such innovations as were made went naturally in hand with the new learning. Ignorance and gross superstition among the people, almost as great ignorance and still grosser neglect of duty among the lesser clergy, these were the abuses Briçonnet set out to cure. A regular system of preachings and readings of the scriptures and, above all, the translation of the bible into the vulgar tongue were the remedies he relied on. Lefevre, the celebrated teacher,

and his disciples were his chief supporters. Lefevre was already an old man when, responding to the bishop's call, he threw off the numbing influence of the University of Paris where he had taught so long with distinction. "Our theologians say in their hearts," he wrote, "'I am your master, I am the famous Bachelor,' but a poor and saintly woman can understand the scriptures better than they."

This early movement had a wide tolerance of view—Luther was much read, and Farel of Geneva and Zwingli of Zurich, and Erasmus, the greatest scholar and most modern thinker of them all. Briçonnet's work took good hold among town dwellers of all classes in his own as well as in neighbouring dioceses; in the country it spread mainly among the gentry, the smaller nobles and more, as has been said, among the women than among the men. Meaux lay at no great distance from the home of the Mornay family on the river Epte, nor even from Normandy, west of the little river, over which the ramifications of the family spread in every direction. It is clear that reading the bible was practised in many of its branches and, as time developed the early Catholic reform into a much wider and less orthodox movement under the growing influence of Calvin, not a few among them openly professed themselves as converts to the new reformed creed.

At the time of these first efforts France was in crying need of religious reform. Tendencies, which must already have been at work, received an extraordinary impetus in consequence of the Concordat concluded between France and the Papacy in 1516, but the very reason for the growing need of reform was also the ultimate reason for the failure of reform through the medium of a protestant church. The seizure of church property by Henry VIII in contemporary England was as nothing to the control over similar property acquired by the King of France under the Concordat. Henry VIII granted away the church's possessions to laymen, but the

grant once made his power over them was gone. By the Concordat the gift, not of the property but of its enjoyment for life, passed into the hands of the French King; at the death of the beneficiary its disposal returned to him who had given it. Realizing the enormous power thus obtained the Venetian ambassador wrote: "The King has the nomination to ten archbishoprics, eighty-two bishoprics, five hundred and twenty-seven abbeys and a host of lesser benefices. This privilege assures him the most complete submission and obedience from the prelates as well as from laymen who want to secure benefices." The benefice remained Church property, never to be alienated from the Church, but the enjoyment of it depended on the king's will, to be granted by him again and again so often as it fell vacant. The power was immense and the injury to the Church as immense. Bishoprics and abbeys accumulated in the hands of a few court favourites or great nobles. Smaller gifts were reserved to the lesser nobility, and church preferment, which in earlier times had been open to all who entered the church, thus passed definitely into the hands of the noble class. The Cardinal Lorraine, in addition to the Archbishopric of Rheims, held nine of the most important abbeys in France; to an Italian, Cardinal Farnese, Henri II promised all the benefices which next fell vacant up to the value of 50,000 livres. 'The pity is,' wrote an agent of Farnese, 'that so far no priest has died who is worth anything much.' These are but two chance examples of an ever growing evil.

While the King, with a few exceptions reserved to the Pope, controlled all the most valuable gifts of the Church, the villages were largely left to abbots and nobles for the choice of their priests. Debarred from all hope of preferment or any better position than that of a village curé, a downward tendency in the learning and morals of these village priests, already existing, was accelerated by the Concordat. But two other results also followed, no less important in the years of bitter political and religious

civil war during the reigns of the last Valois kings. The sharp line drawn between the upper and the lower clergy weakened the sense of unity and allegiance not only in the church but in the kingdom. Out of this severance grew that body of revolutionary priests who were so important a part of the League, who did more than any other body of men to hold Paris in defiance of two kings, and who taught that it was a holy act for one of their number to assassinate Henri III. This was one unforeseen but far-reaching result. The other was the movement towards reform by the most thoughtful and earnest both of priests and monks. Large numbers of the Huguenot preachers came from convent and presbytery, so large that the reformers grew nervous as the reformation passed from a purification of Catholicism into the sterner creed of Geneva, and an ever increasing strictness of proof of conversion was asked of those who had once taken Catholic vows.

The spread of the reformation owed much to these converts in the monasteries. Many became notable preachers and did valuable service, and many remained no more reputable as Lutherans or Calvinists than they had been as dissolute friars. Lefevre d'Etaple's version of the bible in French was carried far and wide by these wandering preachers, and the printing presses were kept busy supplying a sufficient quantity of copies. In Lyons a French version of the Scriptures was printed with the King's permission, but here François I's interest in the 'new learning' justified an action which was later condemned by a catholicism frightened at the use made of the Bible in Germany and Geneva. Not that the attempted suppression of protestant printing presses succeeded, for many towns kept secret presses at work and the copies were carried to every quarter of the realm not only by wandering preachers but hidden in the packs of pedlars.

Du Plessis' mother was a daughter of the Vice-Admiral du Bec Crespin, Sieur de Wardes, and Normandy

where all her kinsfolk lived was specially open to outside influences through its ports. It was a natural highway from England and Scotland on the one hand to Southern Germany and Switzerland on the other. In du Plessis' boyhood Dieppe was almost wholly a huguenot town and Knox, in his journeys to and from Geneva stayed long months there preaching constantly. The family of du Bec Crespin were many of them ardent protestants even before du Plessis' birth. When Madeleine, a girl of sixteen, married François de Mornay, Sieur de Buhy, she must already have been imbued with the strong theological bent which made her subsequently so shining a light in the reformed church. She might have been in the minds of the writers of the English and Scottish Confession of Faith 1643, when they spoke of the importance of the mother of the family. "And doubtless many an excellent Magistrate hath been sent into the Commonwealth, and many an excellent Pastor into the Church, and many a precious Saint to Heaven, through the happy preparations of a holy education, perhaps by a woman that thought herself useless and unserviceable to the church."

From the little sketch of the Sieur de Buhy, given in his son's memoirs, Françoise du Bec Crespin would seem to have been fortunate in her marriage. The family at Buhy must have been an exceptionally good example of a sixteenth century household. It did not belong to the highest nobility, although it could claim kinship in some degree with many of the greatest names. At a moment in middle life when du Plessis needed all the powerful support possible, such families as the Tremouilles, the Rohans, the Chatillons and that of Turenne, then Duke of Bouillon, willingly acknowledged his claims on them as their kinsman. But if the Mornays were not of the highest nobility they were far above the mass of the country gentry, mostly poor and often much below the bourgeois landed proprietors in education and decencies of life. French families in the sixteenth century were

prolific and many a noble household was faced with the problem of providing for half a dozen sons out of some small patrimony. In England a gentleman's younger sons went into trade, followed the law, sailed the seas as gentlemen adventurers, for in England the nobles and gentry formed no class apart. In contemporary France trade was forbidden to a man of noble birth; the long wars with the Empire had left no superfluous energy for the exploration of the wonderful 'New World' which filled so large a place in the minds of Spanish, English and Portuguese gentlemen and offered such marvels of conquest and wealth. Official life throughout the reigns of the Valois kings became a main source of the Crown income, and careers were only open to those who could buy. Law again was almost as much a caste as nobility itself and out of officialdom and law a new nobility 'de robe' was rising. By purchase of some lucrative post a certain number of the older nobility did enter into the new. The father of du Plessis' wife, Charlotte d'Arbaleste, on his return from his travels as a youth in Germany and Italy, thought "only of getting married and securing some suitable employment . . . he obtained a post as president in the *Chambres des Comptes* which he filled with integrity." But for the vast number of the younger sons of noble families there were but two ways of getting a living, should the family estates be inadequate for their support, War and the Church. To fight at the King's bidding was the one duty the State demanded from the noble. His land was exempt from taxation, his life was hedged about with privileges but while the King was at war he was expected to join the King's army at his own expense and with his own followers. Those whose possessions did not impose this duty accepted it as their special privilege and their one chance of winning fame, position and riches. Machiavelli's description of the French army held good for long years: "Younger sons . . . give themselves up to the calling of arms. Thus the French soldiers are without

equals ; being mostly nobles and the sons of nobles, rivals in their ambition to attain the highest rank." Wars were thus the natural and desirable outlet, and so long as the struggle between France and the Empire lasted there was a chance for the young nobles. They fought and plundered and came home with riches in their pockets ; they distinguished themselves and won positions of one sort or another ; they were killed and so an end ; or they returned empty-handed to swell the ranks of ill-educated, war-brutalized and war-impoorished men who swarmed over France at the conclusion of peace, and who furnished an almost inexhaustible supply of partisans for the Bourbons and the Guises, for the personal ambitions and revenges of 'les Grands', for the embittered struggle of Catholic and Huguenot.

The alternative was the Church. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the systematic use of the wealth of the church for the enrichment of private families. François I and Henri II fully understood and as fully used their control over the church as the readiest way to win the allegiance of the mass of the lesser nobility. The rapid growth of the absolutism of the monarchy under the Valois kings can be largely traced to this control ; by its means it became possible to reward and to bribe, without cost to the crown, and old feudal customs and the feudal dependence of the lesser nobles on the greater disappeared under a régime when, for the first time in French history, the king had an almost limitless source of wealth at his command. Not only could he grant the enjoyment of a benefice ; he could also promise its future enjoyment when it fell vacant. More than this he could allow the living incumbent to 'resign' it in favour of a nephew or some other person whom he wished to benefit, although the resignation might be merely titular and the revenue and administration remain with the incumbent so long as he lived. Thus by a fiction the benefice at his death was not vacated and his nominee, already in name recognized as

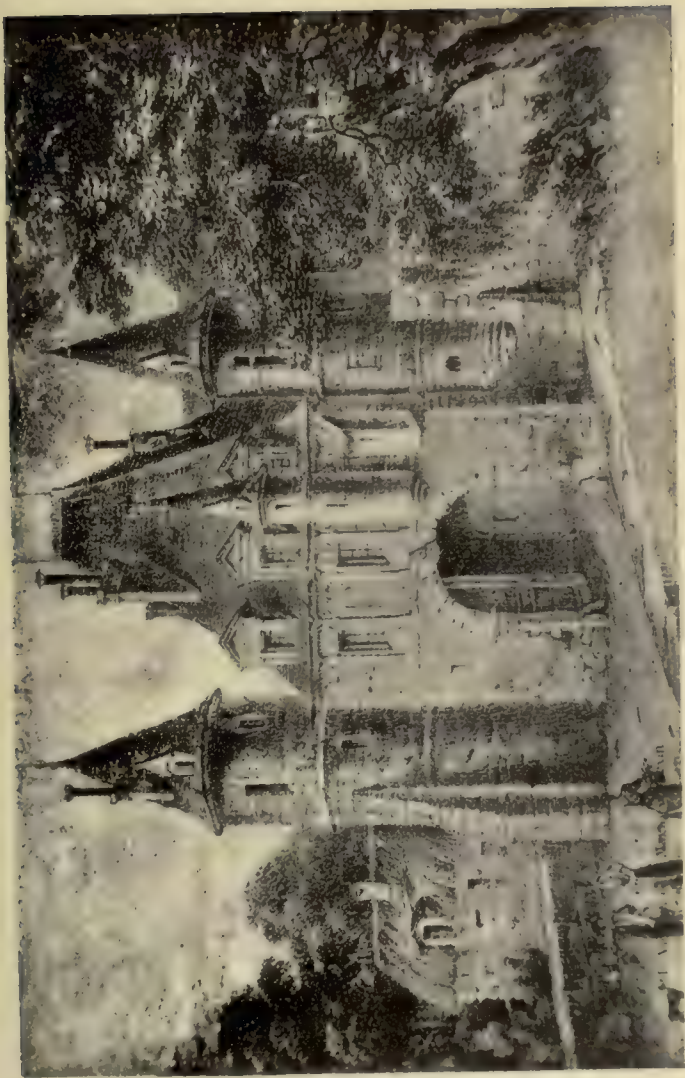
the holder of the benefice, at once entered into its real and full possession. There was no need for such a nominee to be in orders, nor even of an age for priesthood. The poor bishopric of Luçon, granted by Henri III to the father of Cardinal Richelieu—a layman and father of a family—remained for fifty years in the family. Throughout a considerable part of this time the titular bishop and recipient of the main part of the revenue were, in succession, two boys; the episcopal duties being carried out by an administrator until first one and then the second boy reached an age to assume them himself.

In the Mornay family a somewhat similar provision was intended for du Plessis. His wife records that it was only the providential death of his uncle before he had had time to resign his benefices in his nephew's favour which saved du Plessis from the snares of ecclesiastical wealth. Other and similar temptations fell in his way and had he not been a firm convert to the 'Religion' he might have obtained a very fair share of a younger son's claim to church property. Even as it was his chances of preferment profoundly modified his education. Whereas his elder brother was sent into a great household as a page, Philippe went to college in Paris, and donned a clerk's dress while still a child, in sign of his future destination.

The Mornay estate lay in the Vexin, on the French side of the river Epte, Normandy lying on the other. In the country on either side there were many other estates belonging to both de Mornay and du Bec kinsfolk, and the characteristic solidarity of a French family is very evident in the memoirs. This same linking of families was equally apparent in every province, generally accompanied by the recognition of some dominant nobleman, the last survival of the old feudal dependence; someone of greater wealth and birth than those who claimed kinship with him, who would educate the youngsters as pages and take them to the wars when old enough, who would afford protection in times of

trouble and who in return expected service and loyal support in his own need. Du Plessis' kindred, on both sides, were wealthy enough and important enough to stand in no such dependence. M. Le Ronne writing in 1924 thus describes the family estate: "The village of Buhy is situated on a small plateau a mile and a half from the river Epte. Little valleys border it on every side, woods and fields are pleasantly mingled and beautiful views can be seen in various directions. The Chateau and home farm stood in a vast park, enclosed with a wall and the high road from Paris to Rouen runs along outside the northern wall. Two deep ditches, known as 'sauts de loup', can still be traced, bordered with parapets of hewn stone, held in place at either end by square pillars flanked with pilasters. At the western angle of this wall a strong bastion can still be seen, standing square above the high road 30 ft. and more high. A terrace runs along its top from whence there is a wide view of the country. A little belvedere formerly crowned this bastion. A large chapel once stood at the side of the chateau which was known as the Huguenots' preaching house. Chapel and castle and farm have all been pulled down, the trees felled and the park is used for farm lands and grazing."

The chateau lasted till 1842. The only record left of it is a charming picture of the gatehouse leading to the main courtyard. It shows the entrance to a strongly fortified mansion, stone built in the fine stone of the Vexin, with wonderful high-pitched roof, dormer windows and flanking towers, and arched gateway leading to the 'cour d'honneur'. Such a gatehouse must have belonged to a chateau of great spaciousness and beauty, where the Sieur de Buhy could have lived in pleasant state, welcoming his friends, educating his children and showing himself generous to the poor, as his daughter-in-law relates. He would seem to have filled his house very full. A house in the sixteenth century was more elastic than a modern one. The fact that so little store



GATE HOUSE OF THE CHATEAU OF BUHY
(From an old painting)

was set on privacy and still less on ventilation must have made crowding a house to overflowing a simple matter. The house of a country gentleman like the *Sieur de Buhy* would have many rooms but no passages and the privacy of a bedroom would only exist behind the curtains of the bed. The lady of the house had a room to sit in apart, but more likely than not this would be the room in which her bed stood. Receiving friends while abed was the habit for two hundred years after *du Plessis'* death. *Tallemant de Réaux* somewhere mentions the six dressing gowns a gentleman of fashion needed in the 17th century some 60 years later; a summer and a winter one both for town and country life, a fine one for receiving visitors and a black one when a dun came to call. The hall was the common living room; in it was placed the wide family hearth under its great hooded chimney, stone fashioned and carved with the family arms; there on either side, as so many old paintings show, stood the arm-chairs for the lord and lady, roomy and stiff and carved. Of furniture there was no great store. Solid tables for dining were just replacing the earlier trestle tables; large chests, carved, or inlaid in the foreign fashion learnt in the Italian wars, held the household gear and served for seats; smaller chests made both stools to sit on and little tables for occasional use. Italy also taught the use of sideboard and cabinet but at the time of *du Plessis'* boyhood neither were in common use. However, well-to-do folk like the *de Mornays*, a family moreover of some culture, may well have furnished their chateau with something of luxury and refinement. When *Erasmus* visited England early in the 16th century he commented on the insular habit of strewing rushes on the floors where they lay for weeks and harboured all sorts of filth. From the disgust he expresses it may be inferred that French floors were free from such encumbrances, as probably they were in English houses of equal standing with the chateau at *Buhy*. Chateaux were almost invariably built round a courtyard, or if

round three sides only, with a defensive wall on the fourth and often, as at Buhy, with a fine gatehouse and fortified gateway. Montaigne mentions how often the peasants drove their cattle into safety in his fortified courtyard during the civil wars. Kitchen and stables and storerooms, quarters for the lower domestics, sometimes byres and the pigeon-house all formed part of the whole edifice. Servants were numerous in such a household as that at Buhy. The lord had his valets, the lady her women and the children their nurses and their tutor. The Sieur de Buhy kept his 'equipage' and his wife had her coach. There were lands and farms to manage and bailiffs and clerks employed for the work. When du Plessis went to school in Paris he was escorted by enough armed serving-men to ensure his safety on the road. When to all these are added the kitchen and stable workers and so forth it can readily be seen that the household was complicated and numerous. The writer of the memoirs tells us that Mlle. de Buhy, her mother-in-law, was noted for her excellent management and that her husband left everything in her care on his death. She was then but twenty-nine after twelve years of married life.

It will strike the modern reader as strange that the lady was styled *Mademoiselle* after as before her marriage, and the use of the title needs a word in passing. The general use of *Madame* to designate a married woman dates only from the 17th century and even then it came slowly into use. In earlier days the title was reserved for ladies of a certain rank somewhat as 'Lady' is used in England. These favoured few were the wives of 'les grands', of the princes of the blood, semi-sovereign princes, Marshals of France, certain of the highest nobility, and of the *chevaliers des ordres*; also the King's daughters and abbesses and prioresses; all these could claim the title of Madame. For other women, whether noble or bourgeoisie, wed or single, *Mademoiselle* was the only title in use. But whereas in the case of a bourgeoisie the husband's

or the father's family name followed the title the noblewoman would almost certainly have made use of a territorial name. Montaigne protested against the habit. "It is a vile habit and one fraught with evil for France for people to be called after their estates, and one that occasions more confusion of families than any other thing. A cadet of good family, who receives as his portion an estate, whose name he bears with credit, cannot abandon it with honour. Ten years after his death the land passes to a stranger, who in his turn bears the title."

Montaigne felt the loss of the hereditary honour which could cling round a name handed down from generation to generation, but he also felt the confusion which arose from the habit he condemns. Every child, girls as well as boys, might bear a different name and much of the significance of events in history may be lost by those who fail to realize relationships through the maze of names. In England the eldest son of a peer may bear, by courtesy, some secondary title belonging to his father; his brothers will use the family surname. In France not only great noblemen, like the Constable Montmorenci, whose five sons were known as Montmorenci, Damville, Montbèran, Mèru and de Thoré, but the sons of every little squire with a small property or two to divide was known by a different name. Thus in the Mornay family the eldest son was de Buhy, the second du Plessis Marly the third de Beaunes; their uncle was d'Aubleville and his son Villarceaux, and so on throughout the whole nobility of France. And furthermore, as Montaigne complains, should the property pass into other hands the name went with it and the nobles saw springing up a new class of rich bourgeois proprietors 'roturiers' who bought the right to use the name along with the territory to which it belonged. One other point is worth calling attention to. On marriage an Englishwoman loses her maiden name and henceforth in legal signatures as in common parlance uses only her husband's surname. An old traveller in England

noticed this as one of the peculiarities of the subjection of a woman to her husband. "Wives," he says, "are entirely in the power of their husbands, their lives only excepted. Therefore when they marry they give up the surname of their father and take the surnames of their husbands." In France this is not so. A woman never loses her father's surname and signs with it, at least in all legal documents, after as before marriage. Mlle. de Buhy was Madeleine de Bec Crespin till her death, just as du Plessis' wife was Charlotte d'Arbaleste whenever she signed a letter, in spite of her first marriage to de Feuquères and her second to du Plessis.

When Philippe de Mornay was eight years old his father decided it was time he went to college in Paris, and this would seem to be a common age when the home tutor, or the tuition of the village curate was changed for school life. In families where a tutor was engaged it was the habit, as at Buhy, for his lessons to be shared by nephews and cousins as well as sons. Boys learnt to read and write and the rudiments of latin at home; while their sisters certainly learnt to read and write at least. A choice was then open. They could be sent to a school, sometimes to a convent; they might be placed in a College for junior students in a University town, or they might be boarded in a private family with a few other boys, often relatives of their own. If either of the two last alternatives was chosen the scholars attended University classes for juniors. But if school teaching was less desired than a knowledge of the ways of the world, or if poverty made the cost of education a difficulty a further alternative existed; they could be placed in the house of some great nobleman with whom the boy's family was in some fashion connected, there to be educated as a page. Often a child combined both; went to college till he was twelve or so and then entered a family as a page. A lad without money gave his services in return for board, a certain amount of instruction and sometimes clothing, though he might "go barefoot for want of new stockings" as one such

page records ; they had no other surveillance than that of some official in the household. But the sons of richer men were accompanied by their own tutor and valet. The Marshal Vielleville gives a lively account of his pagehood. " In accordance with the excellent custom of placing boys as pages I was brought up as an *enfant d'honneur* in the household of Madame Louise de Savoie, mother to the King François I and regent of France. But I was only with her for four years on account of an accident which chanced. . . . One day a gentleman gave me a box on the ear as I was serving at my mistress's dinner. The repast over I went in search of this gentleman, who was, I learnt, the first *maître d'hôtel*, and pressing him for satisfaction I ran him through the body. This bit of ill-luck befell me in my 18th year. My conduct was not held to be wrong by the principal nobles and particularly the King himself, who could not approve of a *maître d'hôtel* striking his *enfants d'honneur*, more especially those who had tutors of their own to whom complaint could be made and who could inflict chastisement. His Majesty sent for me, intending to present me to the Queen Mother to sue her for pardon, for it was thought the *maître d'hôtel* was dead. However I had already fled the Court." The youthful Vielleville had money and his own tutor and went to Court as a page as the surest way to rise in the world. La Noue, in his "Discours," gives another side to the picture. "Poverty often obliges the poorer gentry to place their children as pages, wherever they can, quite as much to get rid of the burden of their keep as to have them educated. It is notorious that there are a multitude of nobles with no more than 700 or 800 livres yearly income who have four or five boys growing up round the family hearth. I ask you what else they can do but beg their richer neighbours to give them board and instruction. Thence arises a very strict obligation, both from father and child, to him who shows them this kindness. The great nobles in every province owe this honourable assistance to their poorer

neighbours." The son of one of these poorer gentry has left the following account of his education, during the course of which he seems to have pursued most of the possible ways of learning. Jean Mergey says: "I was the fourteenth child of my parents of whom four survived. At the age of eight my mother sent me to college where I stayed two years. She then put me in the monastery of Moustierender, where I would not stop, not wishing to become a monk. She sent me next to live with M. de Polizy, bailli of Troyes, head of the house of Dinteville, a personage as accomplished and as highly adorned with every virtue and learning as any man of his age and birth, who had been tutor to the Duke of Orleans and the King's ambassador in England. He had become paralysed and incapable of all movement and not being fit any longer for a court life he retired to his own house and amused himself with building his beautiful house at Polisy. He took such a fancy to me that he gave himself infinite trouble to teach me all the learning that I was capable of at my tender age. I stayed with him till I was fourteen or fifteen, when he gave me to his brother, a *chevalier de l'ordre*, and captain of 50 men-at-arms, so that I might learn to mix in the world and be trained in arms." A very complete education is here described. First school, then a monastery, next a comfortable home with a learned and wealthy man followed by an excellent introduction to the real sphere of a young gentleman—war and court.

As to what the colleges were like to which these children of eight years old were sent, some knowledge can be gained from Montaigne. In his essay on an *Institution des enfants* he sets out to describe the ideal school, that elusive quarry of educationalists for centuries past. But although his object is to construct a new kind of school he incidentally describes by comparison the pedagogic system then in vogue, and we can thus reconstruct schools as they then existed both from what he recommends as well as from what he condemns. He urges

that teachers should no longer pour learning into their pupils as vats are filled with wine ; he pleads for attention to a child's individual tastes ; that the pupil should be allowed the pleasure of discovery in the world of knowledge ; that mere parrot repetition of words was not enough but that by questions the learner's knowledge should be tested. His curiosity was to be roused by his surroundings and his interest excited by " a building, a fountain, a man, an ancient battle-field, a place where Cæsar or Charlemagne had passed." All hours and all places could serve for lesson time but a lesson time in happiness and freedom. " I would not imprison a boy or hand him over to the ill-temper and sulkiness of an angry schoolmaster. I would not destroy his mind by misery and toil as others do for fourteen or fifteen hours a day. How often have I seen men brutalized by greediness for knowledge." Above all in Montaigne's school strict kindness was to be the unalterable rule. " Instead of being invited to learn children meet with nothing but horror and cruelty. If you would have a child dread shame and punishment do not make him hardened to them. I have always hated the way our schools are disciplined. So soon as the teachers begin their lessons you hear nothing but cries, children ill-treated, masters beside themselves with rage. What a way to awaken the love of learning in these timid little souls. . . . How much better to strew their class-rooms with flowers and leaves than with bloodstained canes."

Montaigne not only depicts the too common scenes of brutality in schools ; he has his say also on the study of the classics, but this is not because he undervalued Latin but because he disliked both the way it was taught and its exclusion of all other subjects. He himself learnt, he says, to speak Latin as his baby tongue for his father engaged a learned German doctor to be his nurse ; one cannot say tutor to a baby who could not yet speak. When he went to school at the age of six he could read the fairy tales of Ovid much more readily than the

interminable romances of Lancelot du Lac and Amadis de Gaul, and greatly preferred them. There was, however, much to be said in defence of the time spent over Latin and Greek. French literature in the 16th century was limited in comparison to the wealth of the classic writers and boyish minds were better occupied with Æneas than with Amadis. The trouble lay rather in the use to which the classics were put, in the remorseless study of grammar and endless repetition of words. Mathematics in their modern sense, were just evolving, and arithmetic, easy to the traditional 4th form schoolboy of our time was still a cumbersome and obscure science.

When Philippe de Mornay and Charlotte d'Arbaleste first met at Sedan, refugees from the massacre of St Bartholomew, they studied arithmetic together and fell in love as they studied. But between du Plessis' school-days in Paris and this meeting he had made the grand tour and studied both at Heidelberg and Padua. Maybe he had learnt mathematics at the latter place, as well as law, fencing and the science of herbs which he says he studied. Since du Plessis' chances of church preferment were hopeful his education was so shaped as to fit him for the priesthood. His school years however were full of interruptions. Civil wars, his father's death, ill-health, attempts at conversion, the outbreak of plague all interfered with his studies, but in the end his dogged determination and application made a noted scholar of him. In a disputation to which he was challenged at the close of his student days in Paris he was able to quote Greek, Latin and Hebrew writers, to argue on Plato and more than hold his own in theology.

POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS PARTIES

IT has been said that du Plessis' school-days were constantly interrupted in various ways but above all by "Les troubles", the civil wars, which broke out again and again after the death of Henri II in 1559. These wars, though commonly spoken of as wars of religion, were extremely complex in their origin, and to attribute them solely to the antagonism of Catholic and Protestant is profoundly misleading. Their origin, indeed, was as complex and as confused as their campaigns, and the quarrel of creeds, although always a serious element, was often used as a mere means to further the political and personal hatreds of "les grands". Nor can these civil wars in France be dissociated from the general condition of Western Europe, where on all sides similar conditions of discord prevailed. In 1560 Philip of Spain was on the threshold of his long struggle with the Netherlands; Elizabeth of England scarce yet knew whether she ruled a protestant or catholic kingdom; Scotland was in the thick of its religious struggle; Germany was divided between lutheran and catholic states; Geneva was in the plenitude of its influence, sending preachers forth on every side to spread the doctrine of Calvin. Following on the same lines, though with the modifications natural to the lapse of time, these conditions, both within and without France, continued through all the active years of du Plessis' life. Religious conflict confused with political and personal ambitions, revenges and triumphs; party leaders drawn from the same families; parties themselves made up of the same mingling of principles, discontents, lawful aspirations and lawless greeds, these were the outstanding features of

French life from 1560 to 1598. On the death of Henri II all the elements of strife were ready. The struggle between France and the Empire, begun by François I, came to an end in 1558. Soldiers, largely of the noble class, without employment, without any outlet for ambition, often without any means of subsistence, swarmed over France. To fight and to plunder, was often all life had taught them. France at peace might literally mean starvation for some and these men were ready for any war and any leader. Others on their return home followed the movement towards the reformed faith already begun by their wives and these, angered by the persecution under Henri II, became more and more ready to vindicate by violence their right to worship as they pleased. Others who believed that heresy was pure damnation were equally ready to fight for its extirpation. And apart from these three classes, the soldier who cared only for fighting and for what he could win out of fighting, the huguenot who was ready to fight for freedom of worship and the catholic who was equally ready to fight to extirpate heresy, there was a vast number of families who still felt an almost feudal dependence on a house of greater importance than their own; a house where the sons had been educated as pages, whose banner they had followed to war, from whose patronage they had won position and money and whose protection they felt bound to repay with their service and support. All these elements among the noble class were there, out of which armies could be formed so soon as 'les grands', the Bourbon Princes, the Guises and the Montmorencis with their host of allied families, fell to strife among themselves.

Throughout du Plessis' childhood a great change had been going on apart from the change from war to peace. Since Françoise du Bec, with her lutheran learning, had first come to Buhy the early movement towards reform, mainly catholic and very largely literary, had developed into a much deeper movement. Some of those who had

stayed a while in Marguerite d'Angoulême's little court or who had been protected by her in her husband's principality of Béarn, had passed on to Geneva. One of them, Calvin, was to change the whole aspect of the French reformation. It is true that Briçonnet the Bishop of Meaux had had many followers among the townsfolk, traders and artisans who learnt to read the Gospel in Lefevre's translation, but with the new creed and the new preachers from Geneva the movement towards reform spread rapidly through the towns and especially in Normandy. Southern France, where the neglect of the catholic clergy was notorious, became largely calvinist both in town and country. While Henri II lived worship was held in secret, a cellar, a barn or a 'basse cour' serving the worshippers' needs who came together quietly by night. Still the numbers grew, outstripping the persecution although that was savage enough, and with numbers came greater boldness. But persecution did not excite revolt. There was nothing in the protestant creed to teach contempt for authority or to dispute the King's power. Calvin, from Geneva, preached the duty of unresisting martyrdom. "If a single drop of blood is spilt" (in resistance), he wrote, "rivers of it will flow. It is better a hundredfold that we perish than that the Christian faith and the Gospel should be laid open to blame." But even Calvin would sanction resistance if the authority of the persecutors could be called in question. Out of this question of authority came the huguenot justification for the civil wars. When in 1585 Henri of Navarre defeated the royal army at the battle of Coutras he wrote to the King, Henri III, "Sire, we have beaten your army and your enemies." Henri of Navarre, heir to the throne, fighting against the army of the League, might rightly use the phrase. In 1560, when his uncle Louis, Prince de Condé, first pleaded his right to resist and swept into his own private quarrel the bulk of the huguenots, it was a very différent matter.

Henri II at his death left four boys, the eldest of whom was fifteen. Those who stood nearest to them in blood were the Bourbons, of whom the chiefs were Antoine King of Navarre, through his marriage with Jeanne d'Albret, Charles Cardinal de Bourbon, and Louis Prince de Condé. Antoine was of small account, a king without a kingdom, shifting his religion as he thought his own interests might best be served, trusted by no party, ignored by the Court. Indeed his principal claim to remembrance lies in the fact that he was father to Henri de Navarre, afterwards Henri IV of France. Charles, the Cardinal, played no important part either, until in his old age he was used as a pawn in the struggle of the Guises with his nephew. The Prince de Condé's claim to remembrance is greater. A cadet of a family which, although it stood nearest to the throne was not in favour at Court, he possessed neither the wealth nor the importance to which he felt he was entitled by his birth. The Bourbon direct descent from a royal ancestor was remote and at no time had the position of the Princes of the blood been well defined. When François II ascended the throne he was not a minor although little able to rule for himself. Antoine and his brother as his nearest relatives claimed the first places in his council but they were set aside contemptuously enough, by the Duke and Cardinal de Guise, uncles to the young King's wife, Mary Stuart. Antoine followed his usual futile course; Condé promoted a conspiracy, whose leaders were huguenots and their associates a rabble of soldiers. The Prince pleaded in justification that the Princes of the blood had a lawful claim to authority and that the Guises were usurpers in the King's name. This conspiracy ended in a massacre in the name of justice. After a second somewhat similar attempt Condé, who was himself a huguenot, having escaped with his life found his best guarantee for safety among the growing party of the reformers. Henceforward the cause of the Huguenots was inextricably interwoven with the ambi-

tions of the Bourbons and out of the alliance emerged the religious character of the civil wars.

In direct and immediate opposition to the Bourbon princes stood the two Guise brothers, François, the Duke de Guise, and Louis, the Cardinal de Lorraine. The Guises were of the house of Lorraine and thus far foreigners to France; their mother, however, was a Bourbon and aunt to Antoine, King of Navarre and to the Prince de Condé. The family possessions were also French, scattered mainly over the north of France and its various members could boast of great titles and great wealth. The Cardinal was reputed to receive 300,000 livres a year from his church benefices. Their sister was regent of Scotland and their niece Queen of France. Their unshaken catholicism marked them out as leaders of the extreme catholics in France while in foreign politics it naturally led them to friendship with Spain and antagonism to Elizabeth and protestant England. In regard to the nobility of France their position was curious. They were never entirely accepted as Frenchmen nor, as the civil wars continued, did this feeling lessen. Duke François was content to use an almost regal power through the boy king, François II, but his son, Duke Henri, created and dominated the League with the intention of practically, if not actually, ousting Henri III from the throne, and of undoubtedly preventing the succession of Henri de Navarre. Twenty years of civil war had embittered hatreds, crystallized ambitions and had widened the gap between the family of Guise and those French nobles who were neither extreme catholics nor bound to the house of Lorraine by personal ties.

In 1560 these nobles were united under the Connétable de Montmorenci in opposition to the Guises and though, after the attempts of Condé to assume control of the kingdom during the minority of Charles IX, the Connétable patched up his quarrel with the Guises to better pursue his quarrel with Condé, yet the bulk of his party refused to follow him. Many of those who had supported

him were huguenots, such as the Rochefoucaulds, Chatillons, Turennes and Rohans, all names which recur, though often in the next generation, throughout the civil wars. On Montmorenci's desertion these threw in their lot with Condé. But apart from those who followed the Connétable and merged themselves in the party of the Guises, and those who helped to give the party of the Princes of the blood its peculiar character of protestantism there remained a very large body of men who believed, above all things, in the unity of France and could realize that the nation's unity need not depend on its uniformity, who could, even while pursuing personal ambitions, see that such ambitions must have their foundations in a kingdom at peace under a king strong enough to rule. From these men arose the third and only enduring party in the state, "les Politiques". In spite of the Connétable's defection as its leader, the great family, the vast possessions and the almost princely power of the Montmorencis remained the dominating influence in this party, always opposed to the disrupting policy of the Guises but never espousing the cause of the Bourbons until it was merged in the cause of Henri de Navarre's legitimate succession to the throne of France.

Of the leaders of these three parties in 1560 none long survived. François, Duke de Guise, was assassinated in 1563, the Connétable fell in the battle of St Denis in 1567, and Louis, Prince de Condé, was killed, a prisoner of war, after the battle of Jarnac in 1569. But the parties remained. Henri, Duke de Guise, the two Henris de Bourbon, Navarre and Condé and François de Montmorenci stepped into the vacant places and the old strife embittered by personal blood feuds went on. It may be wondered what was the part played by the Crown both in the early and in the later civil wars; in those which so disturbed the young du Plessis' school days as well as in those in which he fully bore his share for more than twenty years.

In 1560 François II died, and the government passed

from the Guises to the Queen mother, Catherine di Medici. In writing to her daughter, the Queen of Spain, she showed how well she understood the difficulties before her. "God took the King, your father, from me and not content with that He has taken your brother, and has left me with three little boys and a kingdom torn asunder and without a soul in whom I can really trust who is free from some personal ambition." Charles IX, the new king, was a delicate child of ten. Between the Bourbons, who claimed the regency, the Guises and the Connétable it was Catherine's ambition to hold the balance in such a way that the real power might remain in her own hands. By nature and training she was not unfitted for the task. Brought up in the Italy of the renaissance and educated in the "new learning" she could take her place in the intellectual life of her century. She read and she wrote much; few in her court could show as wide a knowledge of the chronicles of France, or, indeed, cling more tenaciously to their lessons on the glories of its kings; and still fewer can have been so prolific a letter-writer both on private and on State affairs. She saw that her children, girls as well as boys, were well educated. Brantôme, whose flattery does not err in delicacy, having said all he could of the beauty of Catherine's youngest child, Marguerite, turns his praise on to her learning and describes how easily she followed the Latin harangue of the Polish bishop of Cracow and how "pertinently and how eloquently" she answered in the same tongue. As a true Italian and a Medici Catherine encouraged a taste for plays, both tragedy and comedy, for gorgeous ballets and for masquerades. "She even took great pleasure in Zany and Pantaloon and laughed her fill at them like anyone else," says Brantôme again; and like those of her time she mightily enjoyed good solid feasting. As a young woman she was an enthusiastic hunter and her love of riding lasted till old age in spite of more than one serious fall. On her frequent journeys about France she might tire her

courtiers and her horses but not herself. And yet with all her many active occupations she loved to pass her afternoons with her needle "busy with her silks in which work she excelled." In her early years at the French Court, and she came to it when she was little more than a child, she had had to win her way to the respect of the nobles who held her "bourgeois" ancestry of small account. She succeeded with consummate skill and few queens ruled their courts more absolutely than did Catherine hers in her later years. That she often achieved success by intrigue and duplicity is true enough, but possibly cajolery was her best weapon against the violence around her. She was mistress of its arts but she also did much by her "patience and kindness in trying to see every one's point of view," and, "her indefatigable ardour with which she would receive all sorts of people, listen to what they had to say and be as polite to them as they could possibly desire." The fact that she had no real interest in religion, no special policy for France apart from the advancement and security of her family made her tolerant, almost indifferent to the turmoil of creeds and parties around her. As a Medici, nearly related to two popes, she was faithful to the papacy but it was rather to the pope as the fountain of all authority than as the head of a creed, for Catherine's faith may be said to have consisted in a profound belief in authority. So long as the professors of the reformed religion kept themselves apart from politics and parties and behaved "modestly" she had no wish "to hurt the poor creatures who went to martyrdom as to a marriage feast." She made L'Hôpital her chancellor, a man who had long been in the service of Catherine's most intimate friend, the Huguenot Duchess of Savoy, and L'Hôpital's most profound conviction was that "gentleness profits more than rigour. Let us give up the use of those devilish words, those names of parties, factions and seditions, lutheran, huguenot, papist; let us never drop the name of Christian." Catherine, in the first year of her regency,

granted a large measure of liberty of conscience and worship in response to the very general request of the Third Estate, in the meeting of the *Etats Général* in 1560. In consequence the Huguenot churches grew apace and with their growth came an increasing boldness and a loss of that "modesty and respect for authority" which alone justified them in Catherine's eyes. The adhesion of many of them to the party of the Bourbons did much to change her natural tendency to tolerance, not because she cared more for catholicism than heretofore but because the Huguenot nobles became an element of political disturbance, a party, not a faith. As such they immediately clashed with the conception of a state as it presented itself to Catherine.

She was not the only one among the kings and queens of her time to regard the kingdom as a family possession, but where Philip of Spain and Elizabeth of England could also regard their realms as something larger and more intangible, something which claimed as well as owed duty and devotion, Catherine never rose above a clever, scheming, indefatigable mother with more children than she quite knew how to provide for in the exalted way fitting to their birth. Of her ten children seven lived to grow up. François, Charles and Henri were all kings of France in turn. Alençon, so often mentioned in du Plessis' memoirs, she did her utmost to marry to Elizabeth of England. Her daughter Elizabeth was Philip II's third wife, and died in time to let him marry a fourth; Marguerite, the youngest, was married most unwillingly to Henri de Navarre, a childless marriage which began in the tragedy of massacre and ended in a declaration of nullity 27 years later. Of all her children Claude, Duchess of Lorraine, alone seems to have been reasonably healthy and happy. Yet Catherine toiled ungrudgingly for her children, toiled with a real love of work as well as of power such as often comes to vigorous women in later life. She probably thought that only the delicate health of François, Charles, Elizabeth and

Alençon was to blame for her failure. It lay rather in her complete indifference to all things save as they affected her children's success. She could be tolerant, with the tolerance of indifference, to Huguenots when the power of the Guises thwarted her ; could turn to the Guises again when Condé and the Huguenots made common cause ; could pretend to favour the plans of Coligny against Spain when she hoped to induce the Queen of England to marry one of her sons, and agree to Coligny's murder when he threatened her control over Charles. Still further she could see in the great massacre of the Saint Bartholomew merely an easy way to rid France of civil war by murdering the leaders of one party. And because only her own family and herself mattered, with all her statecraft, all her labour and all her devotion as a mother the ruin of France was the fruit she gathered. Three of her sons died, childless, before her, and Henri, her favourite, was assassinated within a year of her death. His successor was Henri de Navarre, a king whose kingdom was given over to civil war and whose capital was in the hands of his fiercest enemies, a king without money or credit and whose very title was disputed, but one to whom had been given the power to see France as something immeasurably greater than a family possession.

FRIENDS AND TRAVELS

Du PLESSIS spent the years between the spring of 1567 and the summer of 1572 in travelling. He set out during a brief lull in the civil war between Condé and the Catholic party; he returned to France charged with information, gathered in England and the Low Countries, at a moment when the control of Charles IX seemed to be passing from the Queen Mother to Coligny. If this were to prove more than seeming it meant that Catherine's favourite policy of peace with Spain would change to the Huguenot policy of active assistance for the Netherlanders against Philip. It was a great moment for the Protestant party and Coligny welcomed the young traveller, fresh from intercourse with the leaders of revolt in the Low Countries, as a person of real importance. A few weeks later Coligny was assassinated and du Plessis a fugitive from the massacre of St Bartholomew. The horror of those terrible days in August must have completed the work of the five years of travel and study and left du Plessis a man well fitted to play his part in a very troubled world.

By the middle of the 16th century, when du Plessis' student days were over, a tour to complete a young gentleman's education was beginning to be the fashion. Something more than the mediæval scholar's restricted way of passing from University to University was sought. It was not enough to study law at Heidelberg and Bologna, Greek at Bâle, theology at Paris, mathematics at Padua; nor even to frequent this last city's famous riding and fencing schools, where Montaigne found more than a hundred young Frenchmen at one time. The young noble, travelling with his tutor, visited courts,

looked at antiquities and famous battle-fields, studied diplomacy and men and manners. Du Plessis at eighteen was exceptionally well qualified to benefit by such a tour. In Latin he possessed a tongue still common to all scholars; he was well educated, greedy for knowledge, and above all filled with an ardent desire to fit himself to take his share of work in the world. No better preparation could have been devised than the frequent movement through fresh scenes and of intercourse with fresh men alternating with periods of hard study at different University towns.

But it was to the friendships which he formed with men of established reputations in scholarship and public life, far his seniors, that he owed most. At Heidelberg he lived with Tremelius and studied Hebrew with him while teaching himself German, from books, he says, rather than by conversation because it was so difficult to avoid drinking too much if one conversed with Germans. At Frankfort he met Hubert Languet, a scholar and diplomatist of high reputation, whose character is revealed in all its charm in his letters to another young scholar, the English student, Philip Sidney. Languet was one of those men who possess the rare power of attracting and appreciating men very much their juniors, as his friendship with du Plessis and Sidney testifies. Both justified the estimate he formed of them while they were still hardly more than boys, and both remained on terms of close intimacy with him till his death. Mlle. du Plessis wrote, "M. Languet is like a father to us," while Sidney in his letters calls him "Most dear Hubert", Languet has been thought to be the author of the celebrated pamphlet, "*Vindiciae contra tyrannos*," which, as Professor Laski says, was certainly written by du Plessis himself. The younger and the elder man were such close friends that Languet may well have had some part, even if an indirect one, in the composition of the treatise. Both were involved in the massacre of St Bartholomew, the horror of which roused

a spirit in all protestants very different to the doctrine of submission to authority taught by Calvin. And Sidney was also in Paris in those terrible days in the house of Walsingham, the English Ambassador. It was Walsingham who saved Languet on the plea that he was acting as envoy from the Elector of Saxony; and it was Walsingham who wrote to England and to Germany to ensure a welcome and friends for the fugitive du Plessis wherever he might shelter. Whether the friendship between Sidney and du Plessis began at the English Ambassador's house cannot be known; that they were intimate later is very certain. Du Plessis had few warmer friends than Walsingham and Sidney whilst he was living in England, and Sidney stood godfather to his eldest daughter. When years later news of Sidney's death reached him he wrote to Walsingham: "I have had troubles and labours enough in these sad days but none that touched me to the heart so nearly."

Another lasting friendship made on his travels was with du Ferrier, ambassador from the French Court in Venice. Du Ferrier was a catholic with a strong predisposition to protestantism, and du Plessis, always ardent in theological discussion, doubtless did something to bring about the older man's conversion although its public avowal was long delayed. Both du Plessis and du Ferrier were living at the Court of Navarre, associated in the management of the tangled finances of Navarre, when the event long hoped for by du Plessis took place. A letter remains in which du Plessis vehemently urges the old man of eighty to "vanquish the world" and make the most public profession possible in a noted church and before a great congregation. "In past years God asked of us martyrdom; now He only asks confession. . . . you have a high reputation in many countries so that it is fitting that the light God has given you should shine around you." Had du Plessis the story of Victorinus in mind as told in the vivid words of St Augustine? Age and bashfulness were not pleaded by the Roman as an

excuse to avoid "the elevated place" where the profession of faith was made. "When he went up . . . there ran a low murmur through the mouths of the rejoicing multitude 'Victorinus! Victorinus!' Sudden was the burst of rapture. Suddenly were they hushed that they might hear him. . . ." But "a natural shyness" overpowered the old Frenchman and he found public confession too near to martyrdom. It was a great disappointment to his ardent friend. Yet another learned man with whom du Plessis consorted during a long stay in Cologne was Petrus Ximenes, the Spanish scholar. But wherever du Plessis went he sought out intercourse with scholars and avoided the fault for which Montaigne blames his countrymen. "Wherever the French go they keep to their own ways, and loathe foreign ones. They flock together and rail against all the barbarous customs they see. For why not barbarous since they are not French?"

Du Plessis' notes of his tour were all lost, to his wife's great chagrin. She records, however, much of interest gathered from his talk. Many other travellers went by the same route and it is easy to reconstruct a picture from the accounts left by other writers of the roads, the inns and the cities through which du Plessis passed. Two out of the many seem specially helpful. Montaigne, whose diary, even if written by his secretary, certainly describes his journey as seen through his own eyes, and the English student Fynes Moryson. The pages of both are full of quaint information on all the details of travel in the 16th century, and though they both started their wanderings some twenty years later than du Plessis it is little likely that conditions had seriously altered; it may increase the interest of his wife's record if something is done to fill the gap left by the loss of his manuscript. Gentlemen of birth and fortune, to which class both Montaigne and du Plessis belonged, travelled a-horseback, attended by servants in good number and of various ranks, and by pack-horses to carry their baggage. Ladies

of the same rank rode, indeed Catherine di Medici rarely travelled any other way, but they also had their coaches. Henri of Navarre, with his mind full of civil war, writes to ask Corisande if she needs a horse for her coach. Mlle. du Plessis also makes mention of "my coach" when she is travelling, and, as if to emphasise their use, she once speaks of consenting to travel a-horseback rather than not to accompany her husband. Water transport was much used, not only in private boats, as when du Plessis travels, as a sick man up the Loire from Saumur to Tours to have a consultation with a well-known doctor, but by public boats regularly plying. Mlle. du Plessis escaped from Paris in such a boat. Montaigne preferred riding to any other means of travelling but he tells how his luggage went on a raft between one town and another. Fynes Moryson, a much poorer man, made more use of water transport, and indeed it was common enough in countries north of the Alps and in northern Italy. Public coaches and carriers' wagons also ran in France and in England, and very commonly in Germany. One traveller noticed that the English had only two-wheeled carts, but that these were so strong and could carry such loads that four or five fine horses were needed to draw them. In Germany public conveyances appear to have been in common use. Fynes Moryson wrote to a friend: "I was alone with a coachful of women. It was a comedy for me to hear their discourse, now railing at calvinists, now brawling together and now with tears bewailing their hard fortunes." Again at Dresden he waited three days till enough passengers collected to fill the coach for Prague. But horses were certainly the gentleman's choice. On a long journey these were often bought and sold again along the road with the usual immemorial worry over horse-dealers. In Italy Fynes Moryson lamented that he had not sold a horse just before reaching his destination for the dealers combined to make no offers till the mounting cost of the animal's keep had made him glad to take any price. On the post-roads horses could be

hired but the system was only carried to perfection on the great highways leading through Italy to Rome. Its convenience delighted Montaigne when he found that a gentleman travelling in his company could hire a horse as far off Rome as Siena and that all that he had to do was to prepay the hire and undertake to deliver the animal to a certain stable-keeper in Rome at the journey's end. The more ordinary arrangement of post-horses from post-inn to post-inn was common in France, Italy and England; in Germany, Fynes Moryson was annoyed to find that he had to pay the hire of a horse back to its stable as well as for a man to lead it home, a considerable expense if a town were distant. The great main roads were crowded, at any rate in special localities, and it was usual for travellers to form themselves into groups both for company and security, or so that a guide or an interpreter could be shared for economy's sake. Such groups might be strangely incongruous, as when du Plessis journeyed through Italy with a little band of Cordeliers on their way to Rome. About the state of the roads Montaigne says little, nor does Fynes Moryson often grumble. Montaigne says he found road-makers at work on the Brenner pass as if this were nearly as remarkable as the villages perched high above him on apparently inaccessible crags. But the Brenner was the great highway between the north and Italy and was thronged with horsemen, carriers' wagons, merchants with their pack-mules, and pedestrians all moving, when Montaigne crossed, in "an intolerable dust". He says nothing of the roads in Bavaria, but of Augsburg he says the streets were fine and clean. Fynes Moryson tells of the rich corn-land, the oak and pine, the heath of juniper and blackberries, and often of the morasses on either side of the roads he traversed in Germany but does not often speak of their surface. Once indeed he does describe how the carters and riders zigzagged along a main road leading to an important town to avoid falling into pits. Perhaps the absence of comment is due to the

universal badness rather than to an absence of cause for complaint. The Pope's new road through the Apennines aroused an enthusiasm so great that it is evidence to the prevailing condition. Montaigne describes it as "a wonderfully fine affair, costly to make and of great use . . . it runs straight as an arrow beyond Spoleto . . . and is the finest road in the world." On approaching Rome he noticed "raised roads paved with very large paving-stones which looked ancient," as indeed they were. Cobbled roads he knew in France for 'pavé' was already in use there. Mlle. du Plessis once took her husband in her coach from Paris to Orleans and was so jolted by the cobbles that a serious illness ensued in which she nearly lost her life.

After crossing the Brenner the entry in Montaigne's diary sums up all that can be said in the matter of sound sense in travelling. "All through life he had distrusted other people's opinions on the subject of foreign countries, because people liked what they were used to in their own home country. Here in Tyrol he marvelled still more at their stupidity. He had been told that crossing the Alps was full of difficulty, the people's manners rough, roads impassable, lodgings bad and climate disagreeable. As to the climate, if he were to take his eight-year-old daughter out for an airing, he would as soon bring her by this road as down one of his garden walks. As for inns he had never seen a country where they were so good, and so plentiful, and cheaper than elsewhere." And yet, in spite of Montaigne's praise, inns were strange places in the 16th century. Naturally they differed from country to country but certain features common to all stand out as peculiarly different to modern conditions. Swiss inns Montaigne praises for their carved wood and fine iron-work; for their coloured tiles set in patterns on their floors and roofs; for their roomy and well-furnished dining-rooms where the company sat at separate tables, one for each group of travellers, and where, not to his liking as a French noble, servants were set to eat with

their masters. He marvelled at the way all their windows were glazed, as if panes of glass were not yet the rule in France. In Germany he admires the coloured glass in the windows still more, as also the way in which they were frequently cleaned. Yet Erasmus, in an often quoted passage, says of English houses many years earlier, that the glazing of windows in England made the rooms unbearably close. Perhaps northern France may have used glass before the warmer south adopted it. But much as Montaigne wondered at the glass in Switzerland he wondered still more at the absence of shutters which could be closed at night for protection against night dews and robbers equally. He took it as a strong proof of the peace and prosperity of the country, though if lawlessness were unknown the dangers of 'night dews' still remained. The serving of meals he approved of and noticed that silver goblets were far more common than in France and that enough spoons were laid for every man to have one; also that each man had a knife of his own. Hands were not put into dishes and plates as Montaigne liked to do and as was apparently usual in France. He owns that it is a messy habit, but then in France far more napkins were in use then in any other country and particular people had a fresh one with each course; the niggardly use of table-linen was a sore trial to a Frenchman. In South Germany many of these qualities in the inns were shared with those in German Switzerland. The main difference lay in the habits of heavy drinking in Germany. Frenchmen, accustomed to 'bien baptiser' their wine, as they called it, were astonished at the vast capacity of Germans for unwatered wine and beer; even the Englishman, Fynes Moryson, constantly describes the enormous quantities consumed as well as the excessive time spent at meals. Still German inns in the larger towns were good.

Both in Switzerland and Germany the "elegant stoves of earthenware" were found very comfortable, though the absence of an open French hearth, in one's

bedroom where one's sheets could be warmed at night and one's shirt in the morning, worried Montaigne not a little. These stoves are well described by Fynes Moryson. "The intemperateness of the cold pressing great part of Germany, instead of fire they use hot stoves for remedy thereof, which are certain chambers having an earthen oven cast into them which may be heated with a little quantity of wood, so as it will make them hot who come out of the cold. They keep the doors and windows closely shut; so as they using not only to receive gentlemen into these stoves but even to permit rammish clowns to stand by the oven till their wet clothes be dried and themselves sweat, it must needs be that these ill smells (and worse ones yet), never purged by the admitting of any fresh air, should dull the brain and almost choke the spirits of those who frequent the stoves." And yet he handsomely adds that "custom became another nature for I never enjoyed better health than in Germany." It seems a marvel that Montaigne could count a night in a stove as a luxury and yet he certainly reckoned it so on "account of its equable warmth".

The sleeping accommodation offered in contrast must, however, be understood. A room to oneself in an inn was practically unknown, rarely even a bed. Nor were there always separate rooms for the two sexes in the poorer sort of hostels. Mlle. du Plessis, escaping from Paris in disguise, slept in a bedroom with two other women in one bed and their husbands and two priests in two others. A village inn near Dresden is thus described by Fynes Moryson. "Before the day starre rose I was walking in a meadow . . . he is soon apparelled that hath a dog's bed in straw; yet the straw was clean which is no small favour, and when I gave the servant a Misen groshe for his pains he was astonished as if he had never seene a whole groshe before. The women, virgins, men and maids, servants all of us lay in one roome, and myself was lodged furtherest from the stove, which they did not

from any favour, though contrary to their opinion I was glad of it delighting more in sweet air than the smoke of a dunghill."

Even in inns that such travellers as Montaigne would frequent, bedrooms had often as many beds in them as there was floor space. In Germany, economy of space was carried to such a pitch that the better beds were raised sufficiently high to allow of a second to be made up under them, where a couple of travellers of the poorer sort could be accommodated. Montaigne rejoiced in the universal habit in Germany of putting a feather bed above as well as below the sleeper, but he complained of the lack of sheets and linen covers for the pillow as well as of canopies and curtains to keep out the cold. Indeed sheets were often not provided at all, or if they were, it was not considered necessary to provide them clean. Moryson was used to this, but he did object to occupying the bed of the innkeeper's old mother just as she left it "she being over ninety". In Augsburg and Lindau sleeping accommodation struck both Montaigne and Moryson as exceptionally clean. No cobwebs or dirt to be seen, the floors of the sleeping chambers were actually washed, curtains were hung "in the French style". In one place a "linen was stretched along the walls by the beds so that they shall not be dirtied by spitting." After experiencing the comfort in Augsburg travellers had small praise for inns in Italy. Windows were unglazed, or at most had oiled paper or linen stretched across them; shutters were solid so that if one shut out sun or wind one shut out all light; beds were so dirty it was sometimes best to sleep on the table; landlords, unlike the Germans, who allowed no discussion over prices however extortionate, had to be bargained with over every item, and if any item were omitted from the bargain it was certain to be charged at an exorbitant price; while food and drink and horse feed were all less generous in supply than north of the Alps. Such were inns in Italy.

Du Plessis continued his tour to Vienna and even into Hungary before he turned west through Bohemia, Misnia, Franconia and other states. In his memoirs almost nothing is said of this portion of his tour, but the gap can be filled by Fynes Moryson whose travels embraced all, and much more than all, du Plessis' tour. By the date when Moryson visited it Vienna was mainly a fortress town filled with soldiers always on guard against the Turk; when du Plessis went there it was to share in the gay doings at Court at the Arch Duke's wedding. Moryson found Bohemia rich in fir forests and corn-land, so that bread was 'good cheap', and possessing a language of its own. The houses, even in Prague, he found built mostly of logs and clay, and the capital although "encompassed with walls yet is nothing less than strong, and except the stench of the streets drive back the Turk there is small hope in the fortifications." Misnia, which forms the main portion of modern Saxony, was also a corn-land with mountains "rich in mines especially silver". Wittenberg, one of its cities famous for two Universities and memories of Martin Luther, was a place which no protestant student could neglect however far calvinism had moved from the earliest reformers. Du Plessis reached Frankfort for his second visit in time for the September Fair, when the annual sale of books attracted scholars from all lands.

It would be interesting to follow the account of famous cities visited by du Plessis but a tour ranging from Antwerp to Rome and from England to Vienna is too extended to follow in detail. Two cities might be lingered over a little while, Rome and London. Montaigne spent several months in Rome and saw it with eyes superlatively fitted to appreciate all its manifold aspects. He describes the Campagna just as a traveller of to-day might describe it: "Rome did not look anything very much as we approached. The Apennines lay to our left hand. The look of the country was unpleasing, hungry, full of deep bogs, a quite impossible country for military

movements. It is quite treeless for ten miles round the city, monotonous and with scarce any houses." As at the entrance of all cities in Italy the custom-house was troublesome, but a worse annoyance than usual awaited a scholar at the gates of Rome. Montaigne's books were carried off to be examined, and not only were they detained for three months but some were returned with impertinent criticisms on their orthodoxy. Rome was above all a city of the Church and how a huguenot like du Plessis could pass through it with no worse trouble than he met with is a marvel. "Rome is a city where no one lives by the work of their hands," says Montaigne. "It is all court and nobility. Savoyards and men from the Grisons come down to work in the vineyards and gardens for all Rome shares in the ecclesiastic idleness." "There are only palaces and gardens here to admire. The streets and shops are no better than in some little town in France," nothing like the busy "Rue de la Harpe or the Rue St Denis in Paris, but the public places and palaces are much finer than these." "The town nowadays lies along the river on either side. The hilly part, where the ancient city stood and where a thousand walks and visits are daily paid, has few churches, and only a rare house, and the Cardinals' gardens scattered over them. He judged by plain indications that the shape of the hills and levels are all changed from classic times, and that by the height of the ruins it was certain that we were walking over ancient houses. It is easy to see by the Arch of Severus that we are more than two pikes' lengths above the old level. It is obvious that everywhere one walks on the tops of walls which the rain and the coach-wheels lay bare."

The gardens are but few in number now or are all merged in public parks, but how greatly such travellers as Montaigne or the young du Plessis, whose enthusiasm for antiquities could not be frightened by real danger, would have delighted in the Forum laid open for all to

see more "than two pikes' length" below the level of the modern streets.

Small mention has been made of England and yet du Plessis spent more time there and visited it oftener than even the Low Countries. This being so it is strange that so little information is given about it, especially since Mlle. du Plessis herself lived in London for "eighteen months in great peace". Of the Low Countries, Antwerp and Ghent, she is more communicative and seemingly more at home there than she ever seems to have been in England. Since she says so little it is worth while to see how England, and especially London, appeared to other foreign visitors. Some of the most amusing accounts were written by Germans who doubtless saw things from a different angle than French people would see them. Still, much the same journeys were taken and the same things were seen. The sea journey to England was generally a really terrible experience with dangers from pirates, small ships and contrary winds all added to the inevitable miseries of a crossing. One traveller, late in the 16th century, records that "the merciful God looked down with fatherly eyes", so that they arrived near Dover, sailing over the very spot where the Armada sank, the wrecks still strewing the beach. They were landed in "little boats which scudded over the impetuous waves and mountains of salt water" to their infinite terror. At Dover they took post-horses to Gravesend, suffering much from the small hard saddles in use in England, "painful to ride especially for anyone who is corpulent". On reaching the river they took a small vessel and "embarked on the Thames, which is tolerably broad and in which there are many swans so tame you could almost touch them," were it not a crime to meddle with the royal birds whose down was yearly plucked for the Queen's use. London was found to be "a very populous city so that one can scarce pass along the streets on account of the throng. The inhabitants are extremely proud and overbearing and because the greater

part, especially the tradespeople, seldom go into other countries but always remain in the city attending to their business, they care little for foreigners, but scoff at them. One dare not oppose them else the street boys collect in immense crowds and strike to right and left . . . so one is obliged to put up with the insult." After this description of English manners it is pleasant to find another traveller able to say that the English "be a people very civil and well affected to men stricken in years and to such as bear any estimation of learning; which thing they that have not had the full trial of the manners and fashions of this country will scarcely be persuaded to believe." London was a small city; the houses largely built of wood except the richer sort which were brick built, and it was the only English town where houses more than two stories high were common. The Thames was "a sweet river which offereth many pleasing delights, and the fields, and also the air is sweet and pleasant." There was "a beautiful long bridge over the river with quite splendid, well-built houses occupied by merchants of distinction" on it. There was also the Exchange which excited the admiration of strangers, "a palace where all kinds of beautiful goods are to be found and where, because the city is so great and populous the merchants appoint to meet" for business. "Westminster Hall a building of great majesty" and "the beautiful and large royal church at Westminster" lay outside the city of London. The travellers took a wherry up the river to visit them and the new splendour of Henry VII's chapel with its glory of carving and gold. Thames, although so sweet a river, was not counted good enough to drink at least for "the better sort". Their water was taken from wells with a "cock to turn on" whence it was carried on porters' backs along the streets, in curious wooden vessels. But the real drink was the "beer of the colour of old Alsace wine which was so delicious we relished it exceedingly." At table the English lived well, and although they crowded their

board with food instead of serving it more elegantly in courses in the continental fashion, yet they did not drink so heavily as Germans nor press drink on others so persistently. It was no discourtesy to rise sober as Moryson found it to be in most parts of the Empire. The same old scholar who found Englishmen civil to the old gives a pleasant picture of the interior of English homes. "The neat clean linen, the exquisite fineness, the pleasant and delightful furniture in every point for the household wonderfully rejoiced me; their chambers and parlours strewed over with sweet herbs refreshed me; their nosegays finely intermingled with sundry sorts of fragrant flowers in their chambers with their comfortable smell cheered me up. And this do I think to be the cause that Englishmen, living by such wholesome meat as they do and in so wholesome and healthful air, be so fresh and clean coloured."

Possibly this old traveller "in some estimation of learning" was used to a simpler life than du Plessis and his wife. They may have been less impressed with the neat cleanliness, delightful furniture and comparative sobriety than he, but they could not have failed to admire the glories of Hampton Court on which travellers spread their enthusiastic praise, its gorgeous state apartments and the Queen, who, though she had reigned thirty years, yet, looked "no more than sixteen" in her marvellous clothes. They visited in noblemen's houses, lived in court circles and took their share in the tangled politics of the time, just as they also shared in the life of the French protestant refugees. Although so few details are given the life in England seems to have been pleasant and the friendships made there lasting; certainly they were kindly treated and highly respected by Queen and people alike.

FRANCE AFTER THE MASSACRE OF ST BARTHOLOMEW

WHEN du Plessis returned to France in 1572 it was in the hope of finding some position in his native country for which his prolonged period of travel had fitted him. He reached Buhy in July and came to Paris early in August, bringing with him letters of recommendation to Admiral Coligny ; before the end of the month the great tragedy of the massacre of St Bartholomew had taken place and all his hopes were destroyed. It was not until 1589 that he won a settled home for his family though scarcely even then for himself. The intervening years were spent in wanderings ; as a refugee, as a soldier, as an envoy and a statesman, in Sedan, England, the Netherlands and to and fro over France. It was only after the surrender of Paris in 1594 that he could enjoy any prolonged stay in Saumur, the city on the Loire whose governorship was the meagre reward of his years of toil.

Nothing could be added which could heighten Mlle. du Plessis' story of the massacre of St Bartholomew, from which both she and her future husband, as yet unknown to each other, escaped through their ready resourcefulness and indomitable courage. The massacre has been a fruitful theme for discussion, but the truth is that many causes combined to bring about the catastrophe. It occurred immediately after the marriage between Henri de Navarre and Marguerite of France, and was preceded by an attempted assassination of Admiral Coligny. The shot which wounded him came from a house belonging to the Duke of Guise and was fired by a man well known to be in his pay. Nine years before, in 1563, the murder of the Duke's father had been widely attributed to Coligny, and though the Admiral

denied the accusation he had not hesitated to call it a mercy of God. In 1572, Henri, the third duke, who had been a boy at his father's death, was a young man of twenty-two and already the leader of a powerful party. The intervening years of civil war had done nothing to weaken the feud between the two families of Guise and Chatillon. But though the Duke's participation in the assassination of Coligny is easily explained yet the crime was not a mere act of revenge. At the moment of his death Coligny was engaged in a bitter, if unavowed, contest with the Queen Mother for the control of Charles IX, and his success involved the complete reversal of her policy. Catherine had seemed, at times, to waver between catholic and protestant, between England and Spain, but there was one matter in which she had never faltered. France must be kept free from foreign wars. Coligny's policy had for its immediate object a war with Spain on behalf of the revolted Netherlands. The Admiral fired the King's ambition, his enthusiasm, gave him a fleeting vision of emancipation, of acting as a king in deed as well as in name for the glory of France and humanity. Catherine had not objected to playing with the idea of sending assistance to the Prince of Orange. It was plainly a scheme to dally with while she still hoped to marry one or other of her sons to the Queen of England and her daughter to the young King of Navarre. When the one marriage was settled and the other seemed hopeless through Elizabeth's eternal vacillation, or perhaps her immutable will, no inducement remained to overcome Catherine's aversion to all war, her still profounder aversion to a war in aid of rebels against their king, and lastly her almost superstitious respect for Philip of Spain. She listened to Coligny, seemed to partly agree with him until, through his influence, the Navarre marriage was settled. This done her one desire was to loosen his hold on the king. She may have hoped that the marriage would prove an effective check on the huguenot party; at the worst she would hold the young King of Navarre

and his cousin, the Prince of Condé, in her power. There must be no war with Spain, no help from France for the revolted Netherlands, no emancipation of the King from her control. Of all the older generation who had been leaders in the state since the death of Henri II Catherine and Coligny were the only survivors of outstanding importance. Coligny gone might not Catherine remain at last in unchallenged authority

The Guise vendetta and Catherine's intense desire to be free from her rival in power joined hands. But there was yet another source of danger to the Admiral. Catherine's third son, the Duke of Anjou, had also his quarrel with Coligny. Anjou, young as he was, had won a great reputation in the last outbreak of civil war; he had led the royal army and had taken for himself the credit of the cold-blooded killing of Louis, Prince of Condé, after the battle of Jarnac; he was *lieutenant-général* of the kingdom, supreme in the army, a hero to the catholic party and little disposed to allow Coligny and his huguenots to usurp his place or to dim his glory. It was the day of young men and Henri, Duke of Anjou, was twenty-one years old. Had the attempt on Coligny's life succeeded Catherine and Anjou probably counted on the sudden dispersal of the crowd of huguenots who had flocked to Paris quite as much to strengthen Coligny as to share in the wedding festivities. They may have felt sure that few would care to linger in a hostile city after so terrible a blow and that, scattered and leaderless, they need not be feared. But the assassin only wounded the Admiral and hundreds of huguenots, so far from dispersing gathered round their chief with demands for justice and fierce threats against the Guises. Catherine and the King visited the Admiral on the evening after the attack and gave him the warmest expressions of sympathy and assurance of justice. The King was probably sincere for he was still eager to carry out Coligny's policy, but the Queen Mother must have known that an inquiry would expose the share she had

had in the crime. She dared not face exposure, and Coligny's death alone was not now sufficient to make her secure. It was thus the failure of the assassination which made the massacre inevitable. Anjou and Guise may have already planned it, in the present temper of the huguenots, Guise must at least have known that fighting was certain to follow unless he himself began the killing quickly. In the case of Catherine it is more probable that panic overwhelmed her, panic of exposure, panic of the crowds of angry huguenots both within and close about the Louvre. The citizens of Paris, always hostile to the huguenots and never difficult to rouse to bloodshed, could be counted on to carry through the massacre when once it was started. At dawn of the day following the King's visit the signal was given by the murder of the wounded Admiral and of all who were with him in his lodging. The huguenots, reassured overnight by the King's promises, were taken by surprise. Over two thousand perished in Paris alone and among them almost all those to whom the party was accustomed to look for leadership and protection.

If Catherine expected peace to follow the massacre, she met with bitter disappointment, but although the civil war which at once broke out seemed on the surface to be a repetition of old troubles, in reality the massacre had profoundly altered the character of the struggle. All question of intervention in European politics on the part of the huguenot party was at an end, for scarce any were left in a position to exercise political influence. But apart from such questions as peace or war with Spain, a change, already at work among the huguenots, was greatly accelerated. The massacre had not annihilated the party, for in spite of the multitude slain it still numbered thousands, but it did profoundly change its spirit. The immediate result was to emphasise the religious side of the movement. Where nobles had been leaders the churches now stepped into their empty places. Ministers, elders, consistories, provincial and national synods, all

the elaborate system of church government adopted from Geneva with the calvinist creed, grew in importance and power. Congregations, mainly of townsmen, took an active share in huguenot affairs, huguenot defence, huguenot aggression. In the south of France assemblies elected from the churches of three provinces met in Languedoc, seized ecclesiastical property, raised an army, usurped both civil and military government and treated with the King for terms of peace as if they were a lawfully constituted power. A new state within the state was taking shape, a union of churches ruled by its own moral laws ; supported by its own funds ; governed, often with a growing and narrow bigotry, through its system of consistory and synod ; able to work as a whole, however widely scattered over France, through its periodical meetings of elected delegates ; and enjoying some measure of impunity through its possession of fortified towns which had been assigned to the party as a guarantee of the performance of the various edicts of pacification. Where Catherine had hoped to consolidate the authority of the crown she had given an impulse to the development of a democratic government in every way abhorrent to her. Had it been a national movement the absolutism of Louis XIV might never have been. But it was never national.

During the days of the League the extreme catholic party also set up its own government, with a similar elaboration of delegates and councils. It not only drove the King from Paris but murdered him in revenge for the death of its idolised chief, the Duke of Guise, and it kept his successor for five years out of his capital. But there was no common ideal between the huguenot churches and the League, no common desire for popular or constitutional government. As a living body the League ceased to exist after the surrender of Paris. The struggle of the huguenots to remain an organization apart, a republic within the state continued until defeated by Richelieu. Their political suppression was due to him ; their religious suppression waited for

Louis XIV. This growth of a republic of the churches can be explained and perhaps even justified in the 16th century as necessary for the preservation of the protestant faith, and nothing could serve as a stronger proof and a stronger incentive than the massacres in 1572. Another and equally certain result of the St Bartholomew was unjustifiable. Calvin's exhortation to suffer martyrdom rather than resist lawfully appointed rulers was forgotten in a hatred of a government that kept no faith and showed no humanity. Not only was it set at naught but its savagery was met by a savagery as brutal as its own. Especially was this the case in the south and east of France where town fought against town and citizen against citizen without pity or remorse. After the escape of Condé, and later of the King of Navarre from the French Court, the leadership of the huguenots naturally fell to them and something more resembling former conditions returned. In theory, at any rate, after 1576, the policy and armies of the party were controlled by the King of Navarre, but the organization of the churches continued, sometimes proving an element of strength and sometimes an exasperation to the wider vision of their leader.

Nor was the party of the Guises less affected by the massacre, although the change was not so quickly apparent. As in earlier days the extreme catholics were led by a Duke and a Cardinal of Guise, sons of Duke François. They were no more content than the earlier generation to fill a place subordinate to the Queen Mother, and after the death of Alençon, Catherine's youngest son, their opposition assumed a character definitely hostile to the King. The avowed object of the League, of which the Duke of Guise was the idolised chief, was to prevent the succession of a protestant prince on the death of Henri III. As each year made it more probable that the King would die childless, the fervour of the League increased. Henri III made an attempt to control it by assuming to himself its leadership, but the one clear

result of the defeat of his army at Coutras, in 1587, was to show how great an illusion his leadership was. As an alternative to Henri of Navarre the League chose to consider Cardinal de Bourbon as the King's heir presumptive. As the Cardinal was sixty and Henri III thirty-five the seriousness of the selection can be questioned. At least it is certain that another alternative was in the air. A fanciful pedigree claimed for the Guises a descent from Charlemagne, and on this a better right to the throne than Henri III's own was set up, and possibly with serious intent. Open revolt on the part of the League led to the assassinations of the Duke and Cardinal de Guise in 1588, which, in turn, induced the murder of the King himself by a fanatical monk in 1589. The story of the League and the war it waged fill many pages of du Plessis' memoirs, while his pamphlets against the League, the Guises and their pretensions to the throne occupy many more pages of his published works.

As in the earlier days of the long religious struggle France was not divided into two parties only. The third party of which the old Connétable de Montmorenci had once been the chief still existed, although after the massacre it was much divided in itself. Damville, the Constable's second son, who was the real head of the family and recognized chief of 'les politiques,' retired to his governorship of Languedoc and refused to leave it for many a year. Coligny was his cousin and his murder not only accentuated the old antagonism between the Guises and the Montmorencis but increased Damville's ingrained dislike of the Queen Mother, 'the banker's daughter' and her horde of Italians who grew rich on the impoverishment of France. For a time Damville and his party made common war with the huguenots in the south. From the later outbreaks of civil war, after Henri of Navarre's escape, he himself kept aloof but at least he allowed neither King nor League to interfere in Languedoc, undoubtedly an invaluable assistance to the combined huguenots and 'politiques'. Many of the

latter served under the King of Navarre and Henri, always consistently tolerant, chose his friends and his captains indifferently among catholics and protestants, caring only that they should be 'good Frenchmen'. The 'politiques', who, as years went on more and more identified themselves with Navarre and his policy, looked to Alençon for leadership in the war which broke out immediately after the massacre. Alençon hoped to use them much as Louis, Prince de Condé, had used the huguenots in the days of Catherine's regency, but whereas Condé was genuinely a believer in the reformed faith and was moreover a man of courage, Catherine's youngest son had no care on earth for any party or any person but himself. Mlle. du Plessis gives a faithful picture of this prince, of his meanness, his unparalleled perfidiousness, his futile grasping after power whether in France, or in England or in Flanders. No man and no party ever joined fortunes with him who did not live to repent it. His death in 1584 left Henri of Navarre heir to the last Valois King.

The unsuccessful campaign in the north of France in which du Plessis shared and in which he was made prisoner, was part of a movement concerted with the Duke d'Alençon. Alençon won what he wanted and deserted his followers and allies; the huguenot campaign failed partly through the better generalship of the Duke of Guise, who commanded the King's troops, and partly through the refusal of the mercenaries in the pay of the huguenots to fight. It seems strange that so much money, sometimes raised with difficulty in France, more often wrung reluctantly from the Queen of England, should have been spent by the huguenots on foreign troops who often refused to fight and still more often dispersed as they marched, in search of plunder or of the food and pay which reached them with scant regularity. Yet the expenditure could be justified by its results, for though these hired armies never reached the huguenot forces south of the Loire, they certainly weakened the

armies of the King and the League by their threats of attack or of pillage in the northern and eastern provinces. Du Plessis' missions to England were generally in search of money to pay German mercenaries. He not only obtained considerable sums from Elizabeth but he also won her high opinion of his integrity and intelligence: no small testimonial from a queen who knew better than most the value of money and the bitterness of parting with it.

Du Plessis was in Flanders in 1582 when the King of Navarre sent to recall him to France. The following ten years were spent in an extraordinary stress of work for Henri and the cause, as a fighter, statesman, delegate to huguenot synods, prolific writer of pamphlets, state papers, justifications of huguenot actions and theological treatises and finally as *surintendant* of the chaotic finances of the King of Navarre. "The Kinglet without a Kingdom" was hard put to it to find money. The prosperous little principality of Béarn, under the Pyrenees, was all that he held as a sovereign prince. From his governorship of Guienne he could rarely count on drawing any resources. His Bourbon inheritance, of which the Duchy of Vendôme was the most important, should have been his most valuable source of income, but the wars rendered even this uncertain. Certain dues on salt and other taxes he had had granted him by the King and there was always the chance that war would prove profitable by the capture of booty. But since his escape from Paris in 1576, Henri of Navarre had led the life of an adventurer, often fighting, never settled long in one place, always poor and yet always expected to find money for cannon and ammunition, sieges and mercenaries, for missions to protestant princes, bribes for wavering adherents and rewards for faithful ones, and to keep himself and his court housed and fed and clothed. Once in a letter to his treasurer he added a postscript, "Armagnac says I have not a shirt left Do send me some," and it was by no means certain that the treasurer

had the wherewithal to comply. It was a remarkable achievement of du Plessis' to bring order and something almost like comfort and sufficiency for court and army, out of the almost hopeless condition of his new master's finances. And yet what the little court lacked in comfort it made up in gaiety. For a short time Marguerite came south to join her husband but she proved a very disturbing element. Du Plessis' diplomacy could not obliterate the scandal of her expulsion from her brother's court although he seems to have made the best of "a very ticklish affair". Moreover, Henri was enamoured of Corisande, the Comtesse de Grammont, and wanted no wife unless it were to laugh at in his letters to the Comtesse. In one he says, "the lady of the camel asks for a free pass for 500 tons of wine 'pour sa bouche', which is writing herself down a drunkard and for fear of her falling off the hump," he had refused. Poor lady, the amount is large, but the phrase 'her mouth' included the mouths of all her household and may be it would be long ere she could replenish her cellar afresh. The allusion to the camel is due to the fact that Marguerite shared a passion common to princes in her century for keeping a menagerie, and her camels and other outlandish beasts no doubt made it no easier for her impoverished husband to supply her needs. After a while Marguerite retired to Auvergne where she lived on the country and contracted great debts and no one gave her a thought until her husband's accession to the throne of France made her again of importance. Almost the last important service du Plessis did for Henri IV was to induce Marguerite to petition the papal court for the annulment of her marriage as the price for the payment of her debts, and even then the King had to concede permission for her to visit Paris before she would agree; probably this was the greater inducement of the two.

Henri of Navarre was unrivalled in his power of attracting devoted service and du Plessis gave his with whole-hearted devotion. It is clear that the King of

Navarre regarded him with the strongest esteem and confidence but he was never on such terms of familiarity as he used to some of his followers. Among the King's familiar letters many begin with odd nicknames, "toad", "my spider," "slut" or "little child", but never those to du Plessis. The truth is that the puritan in du Plessis was never at ease in the carelessly gay, shabby little court of Navarre; he was never willing to condone his master's love affairs. Corisande, Comtesse de Grammont was of no political importance but unfortunately it was as true of Henri as of the Duchesse de Chevreuse that his constancy was eternal; it was only the object which changed. When Corisande was forgotten in the King's absorbing passion for Gabrielle d'Estrees, Duchesse de Beaufort, du Plessis' puritanism joined hands with his profound consternation at the consequences to France. Henri of Navarre was now a childless King of France and so long as Gabrielle lived she was an almost insuperable difficulty in the way of a second marriage. Her death in 1598 was, in du Plessis' eyes, a mercy of Heaven. He could not bring himself to condole with the King. When better courtiers than he urged him not to stand aloof while others paid their court, all he could bring himself to do was "to hope the King's health had not suffered".

Du Plessis was at this date a deeply disappointed man. Henri of Navarre was King of France but not a protestant King. The huguenots, who might have hoped to dominate, found themselves still pleading for tolerance. Whatever Henri IV's predilections for one religion over the other may have been there could be no possible doubt that so long as he remained a protestant he could never be king of a France united and at peace. Tolerance for both religions, peace and prosperity for the kingdom, and for himself an end of makeshifts and hardships and dangers, the enjoyment of a life as King of France after the rough years of life as King of Navarre, these were the goals he set himself to win. But many of the huguenots could not understand his cry 'Are we not

all Christians ?', and to them the conversion seemed a denial of Christ, the last, worst blow of all. For some years du Plessis used his great influence to smooth difficulties and keep his party within bounds but time could not but widen the rift made by the King's conversion. Du Plessis felt deeply the King's growing preference for catholic courtiers, his open efforts to turn young huguenots around him from their faith. Henri, on his side, was angry that his kindly letters begging his old servant to come to court, his assurances, sincere enough, that he meant no neglect to his former party, that indeed he was the King and above all parties, remained alike unanswered and unnoticed.

The final break came when du Plessis published a book on "*l'Institution de l'Eucharistie*" which raised a storm of controversy and invective. The moment chosen for publication was peculiarly unfortunate. The thorny question of the King's marriage was approaching a satisfactory settlement but there were other matters of difference between the Pope and the King. Henri would not give way on two of the most important points at issue between them: the acceptance of the Council of Trent and the recall of the Jesuits, and he looked upon du Plessis' conduct as wantonly increasing his difficulties with Rome. However the public sacrifice of an old and very faithful servant might turn a difficulty into a positive advantage, and Henri was both mean and diplomatic enough to adopt this course. According to Mlle. du Plessis' story her husband was tricked into proposing a public discussion on his book, although nothing was further from his own wish. The King took the matter up eagerly and arranged that a conference between du Plessis and the Bishop of Evreux should be held at Fontainebleau. Du Plessis had been accused by the catholics of misquoting and distorting the sense of his authorities. In a letter to Madame Catherine, the King's sister, he wrote: 'Out of the five thousand passages in my book said to be false five hundred were selected; out of

these sixty were taken and of these sixty just nine were finally discussed.' Everything seems to have been purposely arranged to humiliate him. Very little time was given for preparation, and even though Mlle. du Plessis herself toiled at the verification of his quotations, he did not feel properly prepared for the ordeal. The bishop's supporters were chosen by himself while for du Plessis two were appointed in whom he felt little confidence. One of them was Casaubon, 'a person without doubt deeply learned but no theologian, nor of a quality to hold his own against the splendour of the court or the ruling of the King,' for Henri reserved the place of judge for himself. Henri was extraordinarily anxious for the victory of the bishop, so much so that his secretary declared that his master was less excited on the eve of the battles of Coutras, Arques or Ivry than before the 'engagement of the dioceses of Evreux and Saumur', a gibe against du Plessis' position in his party. Whatever the relative learning and orthodoxy of the two disputants may have been the huguenot was obviously foredoomed to defeat. On the second day du Plessis was too ill to appear and his wife was hastily summoned from Paris. The King's revenge had been cruel. No doubt it served the political purpose for which it had been designed, and the knowledge that this was so was an added bitterness to du Plessis and his wife.

She wrote: "We had this consolation in our trouble that our son, teased on all sides by the courtiers, showed an invincible courage in all his replies. To some who pressed him more closely than others he answered 'Are not you clever enough to see that the King, to please the Pope, has sacrificed my father's honour at his footstool'. The King was very angry and when it was pleaded that the speaker was young and justly grieved for his father, he said, 'He is forty years old, he is not young at all; twenty years of his own life and twenty years of his father's teaching.'"

She adds that the bishop of Evreux preached a triumphant sermon in Paris. A

day or two after a terrific thunderstorm broke over the church, the pulpit was struck and the Madonna's robe burnt, and there is no doubt the event was a real source of consolation to Mlle. du Plessis. This episode left an enduring mark both on du Plessis' career and on his wife's health. She died early in the new century. The beloved son was killed in Flanders in 1605, a year before his mother's death. Du Plessis himself lived to 1623, neglected alike by Henri and by the Queen Regent who ruled after Henri's murder in 1610.

When du Plessis came south to take service with the young Huguenot King such an end to a great career could not have been foreseen. In those days Henri could value du Plessis' unflinching character although he must, surely, at times have made fun of his puritan fervour. He could, however, feel the influence of this on occasion. Once, when he fell dangerously ill du Plessis nursed him devotedly back to health consoling him with "psalms and sweet and comfortable words". Henri wrote to Corisande from his sick-bed: "In truth dear heart, I saw the heavens open, but I am not yet worthy to enter in. God has still work for me to do." Among du Plessis' multitudinous papers a droll one on the "Order which the King of Navarre should observe in his daily life" has been preserved. It gives an insight into the hours of work, recreation, meals and sleep which could be seriously recommended as reasonable in those days; it gives a still better insight into du Plessis' own character, a mentor of thirty-three to a too frivolous master of twenty-nine. It is nowhere recorded that the least attention was ever paid to the order.

"9th January 1583.

"Whoever considers the many graces with which God has endowed the King of Navarre, and the times in which He caused him to be born, will agree with me in thinking that he is destined for great things and will be filled with impatience at seeing him turn aside to petty

ones. Every one acknowledges his vigorous body, his great courage, his incomparable alertness of mind. He is the stuff of which great princes are made and the only thing needed is that he should understand that he is born for greatness and so rule his life that he may serve for an example and a model. The manner in which a prince lives is of great importance to the government of a State and this is our reason for desiring that the King of Navarre should observe a certain order in his life, for without it no prince is respected.

“A day is long if it is well arranged and it gives plenty of time both for serious business and for exercise and pleasure. The King of Navarre should be dressed by eight o'clock at the latest and should then send for his chaplain to conduct morning prayers. This done he should enter his study accompanied by those to whom he entrusts the conduct of his affairs. These should form his council. He should discuss with them every affair of importance which turns up fully and without hurry, and should afterwards sign dispatches already concluded, those which require it being first read aloud. To avoid worrying the King with trivialities his council should have assembled beforehand to decide matters of small import; prepare others of greater consequence so that they can be presented to the King already half digested; look through all dispatches and sift out those he need not see so that he can get through the remainder in a short hour. And if this were done every day no one will have much to do on any one day. The rest of the time till dinner could be passed in such exercise or amusement as the King likes except on sermon days. At his dinner there should be good talk in which his counsellors could share, for his hours will regulate those of his household. His afternoon should be quite free except for an hour before supper, or some other hour as he preferred, when he should go into his study with his council to see what has been the result of previous decisions and to sign necessary dispatches. If there are none awaiting

the King might invent some. Some princes, for the sake of their own reputation, do this without any real occasion, and, by appearing busy, enhance the estimation in which they are held. Now and then it would not be amiss to join the council which manages his household as much to encourage each to do his duty as to countenance them.

“ If His Majesty dines at 10 or 11 o'clock he could sup at 6 or 7 and could retire to his room at 9 or at the latest at 10 o'clock. His time after supper is his own till the minister arrives in his chamber to hold prayers at 9 o'clock. With his time thus arranged the King of Navarre would manage everything without being bored and with ample leisure and his servants would have the great happiness of knowing that he knew what they did and what they were worth so that their labour will be nothing but pleasure.”

If the King of Navarre's life remained a source of scandal in spite of good advice this did not prevent him from taking the duties of his position very seriously. Perhaps one of his most attractive qualities was his ready sympathy with all those whose lives and homes were devastated by war. Du Plessis, recently returned from Flanders, moved his compassion for sufferers there and a scheme, beneficial both for them and for the little principality of Béarn, was proposed. To a generation to whom the devastation of war is only too tragically familiar the following letter should be of poignant interest, while the description of Béarn, perhaps the only spot between the Pyrenees and the North Sea wholly free from the misery of fighting, has great charm of its own.

“ M. DU PLESSIS TO M. TAFFIN.

“ 7th Dec. 1582.

“ SIR,

“ Although I have been long away in the body I am always with you in the spirit and I can never forget the country which I loved as my own. I have lately been with the King of Navarre, and while with him I remem-

bered what an infinite number of people rendered destitute by the wars you have over there for whom there seems to be no help ; so I suggested to the King of Navarre that he should bring down a good number of families to his principality of Béarn. He no sooner heard the proposal than he took it up with his whole heart and promises to do his utmost to arrange everything for the best. In order that you may be in a position to judge the scheme the advantages would be as follows. It is the peculiar gift of God to this country that the pure word of God is preached in French and that all idolatry and superstition is forbidden and banished. If a sufficient number of Flemings were to settle they would have permission to preach in their own tongue. Peace is profound and secure. Justice, which depends on peace, is as upright and as carefully administered, I speak soberly, as in any spot in the world. The country lies between France and Spain, near to the ocean in the neighbourhood of Bayonne. The river is navigable for ships. Silk can easily be obtained from Spain and wool and flax on the spot. The rivers are very suitable for dyeing. The conveniences which your people could get elsewhere would be inconveniences compared with those of Béarn. Corn and wine are plentiful and cheap ; other necessities much the same. In order to attract industrious people to the country the King of Navarre would assign good farm lands to suitable settlers, while the towns are pleasantly situated and any privileges which they could properly demand would be granted. They would find everything needful for their trades and occupations and the kindness of the Prince would make up what the country lacked. I forgot to say that there is a University in Béarn, well provided with men learned in every branch of knowledge and language, where their children could be educated.

“ The great length of the journey might frighten them but God would provide and the King would do all in his power. They could come by sea as far as Bayonne,

which is just on the borders of Béarn, and to lessen the cost they might travel as far as La Rochelle in the Flemish boats which fetch salt from Brouage or Ré, or in the boats which carry wine from La Rochelle to Flanders. When they arrive arrangements would be made to convey them by ship to Bayonne and the King would do his utmost to facilitate the journey. My advice is, if any people over there care to consider this offer, that some worthy man should be sent here to look at the place and he could also requisition everything needful to carry the scheme through. He would find plenty of gallant and kind-hearted gentlemen ready to look after him and see he did not go back empty-handed.

“As a start a hundred or two hundred families would be warmly welcomed and I am certain they would find themselves so well off that they would never want to leave. We need tapestry workers, cloth weavers, dyers, tanners, linen weavers, makers of serges, fustians, gold and silk trimmings, etc. A really good painter, who can draw from the life, would be well entertained by the King of Navarre, and if a minister would lead the little colony he would be welcome and would be treated on a footing with the ministers of the country. . . . The desolation I saw at Hundscot put it into my heart to make this proposal and you do not lack other devastated districts. I beseech God to have pity on your poor country and to give you long and happy life.

“FROM NERAC.

“P.S.—I write by the King of Navarre’s command and you can rely on this letter as if it were written by himself.”

CONCERNING DRESS AND DUELLING

So intent is Mlle. du Plessis on relating all that she thinks important in her husband's life that she neglects much that might have been of interest in her own. Of her early life she tells something but after her return from the Netherlands in 1582 the record is very meagre. One episode has happily been preserved in a separate paper which finds a place in the printed collection of du Plessis' miscellaneous writings. She does not think it worthy to be included in her husband's memoirs, but it paints her character, her surroundings, the little provincial town to which her wanderings had brought her and the bigoted ministers who ruled over the huguenot flock there so well, that it seems right to let it find its place in the family story. There is a tragi-comedy in the really heroic struggle between the court lady of unblemished propriety and the pastors of Montauban over the way she should dress her hair. She does not defy them because she loves wire pads and false hair, although she is perfectly clear about the duty of each class to dress in the mode correct for that class; silk for the *noblesse*, fustian for the *bourgeoisie* and sumptuary laws to regulate the decencies of life. She would not have disputed the right of the National Synod of all the churches to interfere in the dress of the faithful. But she would not sit by tamely while women, less able to defend themselves than she, were bullied nor could she submit to the arrogance of the ministers of Montauban in their claim to override the decisions of the national and provincial synods. The quarrel is a curious revelation of the inner life of the huguenot communities; it is also an interesting illustration of the development of church government

and of the important position taken by the French ministers towards the end of the great century of reformation. Montauban might have been in Scotland and its ministers and elders friends and followers of John Knox. The quarrel, carried on for many months without any yielding of the stubborn calvinist conscience on either side, is a curious study in fashions and characters. It is worth while to dig a little deeper below the surface and to try and discover what lay below a struggle whose apparent triviality is one of its most amusing features.

The first fact to come to light is the great change which had come over the reformed church in France since du Plessis' childhood. In the middle of the century the movement towards protestantism was still confined in great measure to the families of the nobles; "preachings" were privileged, if allowed at all, to certain seigniorial houses; organization hardly existed; congregations, or as they were properly called churches, could only be found in a few great cities; ministers were often also tutors to the children of protestant noblemen or were men supporting themselves by learning. Forty years had brought about a great change. Nobles were no longer the mainstay of the protestant communities; citizens of all ranks had joined the huguenot churches in thousands; lawyers, merchants, shopkeepers and artisans now formed the bulk of the congregations. The peasants still stood outside, but this was equally true of any movement religious or political, or indeed of any collective life until long after the 16th century had passed. The field labourer was too ignorant, too entirely outside any effort to raise him from the misery, the poverty and hopelessness to which the civil wars had brought him. Even after Henri IV's death, when a period of peace and good government had done much to restore agricultural prosperity, the lot of the labourer called forth a bitter complaint to the Regent, Marie de Medici, and her son.

"Pray God, sire, that you may come to know your kingdom. . . . You will see an infinite number of men

dragging out a miserable life in never-ceasing toil which profits them nought but a mouthful of bread, exposed to the extortion of your tax-gatherers, the avarice of usurers, vexations and thefts of your officials . . . despising themselves as beneath the lot of the meanest beast." As the old song said :

"Ce pauvre laboureur
N'a trois petits enfants
Les mis a la charue
A l'age de dix ans."

Lodged and fed and labouring little differently to their cattle, their land "shaved twice a year" by the tax-gatherer, uneducated and untouched by the changes natural to town life, such people had small inducement to interest themselves in religious movements. Even if their very misery could have moved them they would have been restrained by the dominating influence of their lives, love of the soil, the deep absorbing passion of the French peasant for the soil that owned them even as they owned it. During the long years of civil war misery often drove the peasants to brigandage; the smallest lull brought them back to the fields, to the farm-yard with its few poultry, the poor house with its rough and scanty furniture where the same roof often served for the cattle more valuable than the children.

If the peasantry rarely joined the huguenot churches their misery must have been known to the huguenot ministers. The country lay close about the little towns and the farm folk brought their produce to market. And as some of the sons of the better-to-do farmers sought a little learning and a possible career in the catholic church so here and there a peasant entered a huguenot school for the ministry and passed on to Geneva for ordination. For the huguenots had been very zealous for education. Their ministers were carefully taught; most, after studying in France, went to Geneva and there learnt 'pure doctrine' and the strict

rule of that city. They also learnt to look on life with the eyes of a country where neither nobles nor abject poverty were tolerated and where church officials ranked high in importance. Returning to France such men brought back to the towns of their ministry the same ideal of city rule as they had admired in Geneva, and extending it gradually they created the whole elaborate system of church government, starting with the church consistory of pastors and elders and rising through colloquies, synods, national and provincial, to the Assembly of elected delegates which could be called together in times of special need. Such an organization, which argued a democratic ideal alien to the whole spirit of government in France, could be used with a tyranny common enough to democracies. In the hands of the consistory of Montauban it showed itself in its narrowest and stubbornest spirit, but narrow and stubborn as it might be it was at least true to the ideal it had formed of a Christian community. Certain extravagances were in the opinion of the ministers of Montauban forbidden not only by the spirit but by the very letter of holy writ, and if this were so court ladies must conform just as much as serving maids. Nor were they daunted by any social distinctions even in an age when the difference between noble and bourgeois was a difference which ran through the whole of life. As ministers they were above such earthly considerations; as private men it is obvious that they very humanly enjoyed the outrage they inflicted on one of the leading nobles of the little court of Navarre. It is odd that they should have attacked one who was an important leader in the whole huguenot church. Possibly this was a further manifestation of the great change towards democracy which had come over the huguenot community, slowly at first and with increasing speed since the massacre; possibly something was grudged to du Plessis merely because part of his importance rested on his rank.

It is not difficult to find excuses for their churlish

treatment of Mlle. du Plessis in the preposterous extravagance of dress under the last Valois kings. Mlle. du Plessis pleaded that neither she nor any of her household had ever overstepped the limit of "modest attire", nor is there the smallest ground for doubting her statement. The fault lies in the absurdity of the modes in vogue. If fifty years ago ladies had gone to church in the regulation court-dress of Queen Victoria's reign it is probable that the bishops and vicars would have had something to say on the matter, and although it is unlikely that ladies three hundred and fifty years ago wore their grandest clothes at a preaching or communion, yet there were certain fashions proper for the noblesse just as peculiar to them as the bare shoulders and court train to the frequenters of Victoria's drawing-rooms. There was, however, this difference that a class distinction in dress was in use, not only on special occasions but on every day and all day, and to abandon it was to abandon something more than mere finery. Certain materials were reserved for the nobility, certain colours forbidden to the bourgeoisie, a few could only be worn by royalty. No bourgeoisie might wear gold lace, gold hair-nets or spangles on her skirt; lace of all sorts was forbidden although the beautiful art was rapidly perfecting itself on the pillows of Flanders. When escaping from the St Bartholomew Mlle. du Plessis feared that the lace on her shift would betray her disguise as a servant-girl. Dress was a matter of rank and rank was the basic fact of all social life, and thus a quarrel over wigs and wires was not the wholly frivolous thing it seemed.

The fashions of the day were so extravagant that it is difficult to see why the hair gave greater offence than farthingales and tight lacing. Montaigne declares that women killed themselves with the wooden or metal frames into which they forced their figures, and his statement is borne out by the surgeon, Ambrose Paré who says he "found cases where tight lacing had made the ribs ride one over the other." The queer flat-

ched portraits of Queen Elizabeth's day are due to a fashion in dress and not to the artist's inability to draw a woman's figure. The artificial flattening of the bust was emphasized by the farthingale which padded out the hips and spread the skirts out to a portentous size. Sumptuary law restricted the spread of a farthingale to a little over two yards but this was considered a cruel interference. When Charles IX rode into Toulouse the streets were lined by women petitioning with tearful vehemence for a greater amplitude, and the King was pleased to grant them full freedom in their folly—at any rate in Toulouse. Charles cared little for dress but his brother Henri's only rival was their sister Marguerite. The diarist, L'Estoile, describes Henri as the King "who wore a ruff half a yard wide and who invented a rice starch to stiffen it till he looked like St John with his head on a dish." His doublets were padded out till he resembled a pouter pigeon and his breeches were so tight he had to be lowered into them by his valets; his hair was frizzed and spread over 'arcelets' or hoops of wire; nor was his queen's dress less important than his own. "Henri de Valois, doubtful King of France, imaginary King of Poland, starcher of his wife's collars and curler of her hair," such was the gibe of the Parisians in the days of the League.

Marguerite, Queen of Navarre, was more lucky in her chronicler. In his character sketches the Abbé Brantôme, a secular abbé by the way, put no restraint on his pen when the peerless Marguerite was to be described. "To please her excellent mother she appeared in a superb robe of cloth of silver," ruff and veil and jewels all described, and "bearing herself more like a goddess of heaven than a queen on earth," and when complimented on her appearance she replied "when I get back to Paris I shall take none of my gowns with me. I shall only take my scissors and materials so that I can dress in the current mode." The Abbé, who stayed in the court of Spain at one time, says that Marguerite's elder sister never wore

a dress twice, so highly did Philip II esteem his French wife. However this may be, the more gold and silver lace, spangles and jewels ladies wore the greater were Brantôme's ecstasies, and he praises the Queen of Navarre as highly for her infinite invention in dress as for her Latin and her wit. Where Marguerite led others followed with more or less success and with more or less sobriety.

Nor did the bourgeoisie fail to do their best with their more restricted opportunities. Any sort of cloth and serge was free to them and though they might not wear silk, velvet was not forbidden as a trimming to their skirts and sleeves. Brittany women to this day use velvet in much the same way as was the fashion among the middle-class women in the 16th century. A citizen wife is described as being "dressed *without hair*, her cap of velvet, an overdress of serge and an underdress of violet cloth, buckled shoes and a farthingale to spread her skirts over." Such women carried ample pouches hung to their girdles with needle and thread and housekeeping requisites in it and the keys hanging by its side. One good housewife carried no less than thirty-two, and keys were not very small in those days. The lady in their stead hung her fan and scent bag and little mirror, and perhaps fastened to her bodice one of the new "Nuremberg eggs", as the exquisitely-adorned watches just coming into use were called from their place of origin. It is noteworthy that the city lady was dressed "without hair". The wearing of false hair and wigs was very prevalent. It might be inferred from Mlle. du Plessis' story that they were only in use among the court ladies, but this was not the case entirely; what the ministers seemed to have held in particular abhorrence were gold nets and still more 'arcelets', that is wire circlets used to stretch the hair over. How a bourgeoisie indulged in false hair earlier in the century is told in one of Erasmus' letters, and it is unlikely that its use was discontinued. His landlady "punched the servant-girl's head with her

fists. 'Have you no nails' said I. She laughed. 'I would fight her gladly enough,' said she, 'if I were strong enough.' 'Victory is not always to the strong,' said I. 'Cunning may do something.' 'What cunning?' said she. 'Tear off her false curls,' answered I. I was only joking but see what came of it. While we were at supper in runs our host breathless and panting. 'Masters, masters,' he cries 'come and see a bloody piece of work.' We fly, we find mistress and maid struggling on the ground. Ringlets lay on one side, caps on the other, handfuls of hair lying littered about the floor. . . . After we had returned to the table in came the landlady in a fury to tell her story, 'I was going to beat the creature when she flew at me and pulled off my wig, then she scratched my eyes and then she tore at my hair.' We consoled her as well as we could. We talked of the chances of mortal things and the uncertainties of war."

Erasmus and his landlady were dead long before Mlle. du Plessis' troubles, but, writing nearer to her time, the Venetian ambassador relates the reigning fashion of the day. He draws a comparison between the artificiality of Paris and the more natural modes in Italy. "The arrangement of their hair is very different to the Italian mode. They use circlets of metal and pads over which the hair is drawn to give an appearance of a wide forehead. Hair is generally black because it makes their cheeks pale, for paleness, if not due to illness, is considered a beauty in France." Wigs made of hair or of dyed tow easily supplied blonde ladies with black hair, and dyes and grease changed the colour of their natural locks, while powders and cosmetics secured a fashionable complexion. Cosmetics were much in use and scents were many and strong, so strong that it was said that those used by the King and his favourites would overcome the smell of the streets of Paris as they passed along them; some justification for their use certainly. Once, when a little town in southern France was sacked, Henri

III wept, not for the loss of life but because the most exquisite scent and cosmetic establishment in France had been burnt to the ground. Marguerite's face was naturally pale and her hair very black, but whether to differ from other beauties or from mere perversity she preferred to wear yellow wigs. "I have sometimes seen her," says the admiring Abbé, "with her own natural hair without any wig to disguise it, and although her hair was very dark she knew how to curl and frizz and arrange it so cunningly, in imitation of the Queen of Spain, who always wore her own hair in the Spanish fashion, that no other coiffure suited her better. . . . And yet this mode did not please her and she rarely used it, but preferred wigs most daintily fashioned." Being a lady of infinite resource in matters of dress Marguerite invariably chose pages with yellow hair and had it cut off to make her wigs. It does not need much research into the fashions of her day to understand a wish on the part of the huguenot pastors to reform dress as well as doctrine. Those of Montauban were certainly of opinion that they had the sanction of St Peter to uphold them in their warfare against 'arcelets' and wigs. Mlle. du Plessis, on the other hand, argued that if St Peter condemned wigs when he spoke of 'plaiting of hair' he also condemned 'wearing jewels of gold' to which the ministers made no objection. It was a pretty quarrel and it is a pity that there is no mention of the decision of the Synod to which the lady appealed.¹

As is not unnatural the latter part of Mlle. du Plessis' book falls off in interest. She suffered much from ill-health and increasing trouble with her eyes made both reading and writing difficult. Nor was there the same richness of material to fill her pages as in earlier years. The civil war gradually dwindled into isolated struggles in which her husband played no very important part. As King of France, Henri IV could not ignore those who had served Henri III and were ready to serve him, and

¹ See letter of Mlle. du Plessis to M. de la Cour, p. 290.

positions which du Plessis might have hoped to fill were given to others. Nor did his uncompromising protestantism make his employment any the easier for a king whose first object was to win the goodwill of his catholic subjects. The natural result followed and du Plessis and his wife, with leisure on their hands and doubt and disappointment in their hearts, became more and more absorbed in the fortunes and future of the huguenot church. Much of the end of the memoir is devoted to the difficult shaping of the Edict of Nantes and subjects of kindred interest. Du Plessis was, however, employed in one or two missions of importance before the unfortunate publication of his book on the Eucharist finally banished him from favour. Apart from one curious incident in his life and some passing mention from time to time of family affairs there is little of personal interest to be gleaned from Mlle. du Plessis' later narrative, little of that vividness which, in the earlier pages, breathes the very breath of life into the long dead years. But in the year 1597 an attack was made on du Plessis which looked very like an attempt at assassination, and his wife, filled with all her old fire, eagerly relates the story and its consequences. It brings out the singular mixture of savagery and justice, of codes of honour and the practice of private revenge and, perhaps more clearly than anything else, the solidarity of a French family even to the remotest kinship which are all so characteristic of the century.

Men's minds were in a strange confusion on the subject of honour, duelling and assassination, and nowhere is this better shown than in Brantôme's *Discours sur les Duels*. He speaks of duels arising from political causes, of duels of revenge carried on from one to another in the true spirit of vendetta, of duels arising out of jealousy whether of king's or mistress' favour, and above all of duels for 'a nothing', a frivolity, a mere love of fighting which brought so many lives to an end. The pleasantly reminiscent abbé was no less keen on the deportment of

a gentleman than on the exquisite adornments of a court lady, and his pages bring his readers into the closest touch with the events he relates. It is not essential to prove that his accounts of the many duels he has known are accurate; it is enough that they reflect the opinion and the sentiment of the age. Their charm is enhanced by the introductory words to many of his stories "When I was in Rome", "I was told in Scotland", or "I had this on good authority in Spain", as well as by his claim to kinship or friendship with many of the duellists.

The old duel in the lists with judges and spectators came to an end in the reign of Henri II, but secret duelling took its place and was no whit less savage. It was a common thing for the seconds and even 'tierces' to fight together while the principals settled their own quarrel. There was no obligation on a victor to offer a vanquished foe his life, only Brantôme does insist "speaking as a Christian", that if the offer is made it should be done courteously and not in such terms that a gallant man would prefer death to surrender. Tricks of all sorts were common; a dagger finished a fallen antagonist; servants, concealed, rushed out and turned the fortune of the fight or avenged a master's death. Brantôme condemns "*supercheries*" of all sorts; above all he recommends the insertion in a challenge of the words "with the usual weapons", and then goes on to relate how a Gascon killed his man with a bow and arrow in the use of which he was an expert whereas his antagonist had never handled a bow before; and of another duellist who demanded such an array of costly arms and chargers that his opponent, though he came off victor, was fairly ruined by the cost. He throws doubt on the truth of a story that a M. Millaud, who should have fought in his shirt, wore "a light cuirass cunningly painted to look like flesh" so that his enemy's second was deceived and his principal thereby killed, but the story found credence, and where it met with doubt it was not because it was dishonourable but because it was



DUEL OF THE "MIGNONS"

improbable that a painter would be skilful enough to "make iron look like flesh".

One of the most celebrated duels of the day was that fought by six of Henri III's 'mignons'. L'Estoile, the diarist whose pages chronicle the life of Paris for close on forty years, made the following entry: "On Sunday, 27th April 1578, to settle a quarrel about nothing at all between Caylus and Entragues, mignons of the King, Caylus, Maugiron and Livarot met Entragues, Riberrac and the young Schomberg at five in the morning near the Bastille St Antoine, and there fought with such fury that Maugiron and Schomberg were left dead on the ground, Riberrac died of his wounds on the morrow at midday, Livarot escaped but was laid up for six weeks from a great blow on his head; Entragues got off safe and sound; Caylus, the aggressor and origin of all the trouble, languished for thirty days with nineteen wounds in his body and died on May 29th. The King visited him every day and promised the surgeons 100,000 crowns if they cured him and another 100,000 to his darling mignon to encourage him to get well . . .; but he died crying aloud 'my king, my king' without once calling on God or his Mother." Livarot escaped with his life in 1578 to be killed in a duel in 1581. The fight took place in a little island in the Loire without seconds, a practice which Brantôme considers very unwise. In this case Livarot's servant lay concealed behind a bush and as his master's slayer left the ground he sprang out and killed him "before he could say 'What's up'". No one was sure whether Livarot had placed the man there to revenge him if he fell, but no one would have been particularly shocked if he had. Duels were fought with the object of killing and why not by one way if not by another, although Brantôme, indeed, opines that Livarot was "*trop galant homme*" to have done such a thing.

Mingled with Brantôme's discourses on duelling are stories of what would nowadays be called assassinations of revenge. The distinction between such and duels seems

to have been slight, nor, if they were carried out with courage and bravado, were they scarcely less honourable. Few stories could better illustrate the spirit of the age than the story of the Baron de Viteaux "the paragon of France, who was not less esteemed in Italy, Spain, Germany, Poland and England than he was in France. He was little in body but great in courage . . . and held the maxim for true that vengeance could be sought by every means and trickery be met by trickery without loss of honour." De Viteaux finally fell by the hand of a very young man, Millaud, the same whose victory was ascribed to a painted cuirass. De Viteaux fell and Millaud stabbed him as he lay "without the courtesy of offering him his life. It was a cruel end for de Viteaux but not at all dishonourable." Nor did Brantôme think the action which led to his last duel at all more dishonourable than his death. The fight with young Millaud was the end of a long vendetta. The Baron de Viteaux lost two brothers in duels. One, a boy of fifteen was speedily avenged, for his slayer, almost his murderer, was caught by de Viteaux and killed "without ceremony". Unhappily the man was a favourite of Henri III, at that time Duke of Anjou, and de Viteaux had to fly to Italy. While there another brother was killed by the elder Millaud, father of de Viteaux' vanquisher. The baron returned with his beard grown long and disguised as an advocate. "He lodged at that little house at the end of the Quai des Augustins watching his man pass to and fro. At last seeing his chance he left his shelter one day only accompanied by the two brothers Boucicault, commonly known as de Viteaux' lions, and attacked Millaud, who had five or six men with him, killed him without much trouble and got happily out of Paris." Pursued by the provost, de Viteaux was captured and imprisoned. King Charles IX and Anjou, recently elected King of Poland, would have had him executed but his many friends interceded for him. "M. de Thou, *premier president*, argued with the two kings that if

Gounellieu and Millaud had been executed for the murder of de Viteaux' two brothers then de Viteaux should justly suffer death too ; but things being as they were equal justice ought to be done and de Viteaux pardoned as the others had been." Judgment was suspended and the King of Poland departing for his new kingdom de Viteaux was set free " to go about Paris and the court in better case than ever, welcomed and liked by all the world." On Charles' death Henri came home from Poland and the vendetta was started again by du Guast, a friend of Millaud and a favourite of the new king. De Viteaux feeling himself in danger came one evening to du Guast's lodging where he found him abed, unwell. Du Guast sprang into the 'ruelle', or little passage in the alcove behind the bed, and defended himself with a boar spear, but de Viteaux " with a very short and sharp sword, which is the best weapon for such a purpose, struck him three or four blows and left him for dead ; and he died two or three hours later." De Viteaux, who had set his men to watch, " got out of the lodging without any noise or fuss, and no one could ever prove the murder against him. But enough of de Viteaux. If I could immortalize him I would do it for the great friendship between us for these fifteen years past, always kept alive by many kindnesses." So writes the Abbé Brantôme.

The incidents are prior to the attack on du Plessis but the belief in a right to avenge wrongs had not changed. In the case of du Plessis men occupying the greatest positions thought it the duty of kinship to offer not only their own swords in his defence but also the troops they commanded for the King's service. They could indeed have pleaded that as du Plessis and his opponent belonged to opposite parties the incident was a part of the scarcely extinguished civil war, and that du Plessis' position in the huguenot party heightened the importance of the outrage. But though friends promised help and the King justice the final settlement of the quarrel

was left to the court of the Constable and Marshals of France, under whose jurisdiction affairs of honour fell. Many people shared Mlle. du Plessis' opinion that the culprit should have been left to the ordinary court of law for punishment and that the King could not free himself from the imputation that he had shown scant zeal in his old servant's cause. The whole story makes curious reading.

Apart from this episode related in considerable detail mention of other family affairs can be found scattered through the years between 1592 and 1606, when the memoir ends; the loss of their only son who survived infancy, the marriage of their daughters, the birth of grandchildren, the deaths of the elder generation and efforts to establish the family fortunes; these have been gathered together in one chapter so that the continuity of the family history may be preserved. Philip was never married. The memoirs were written for him "So that you may not be without a guide" in his mother's words, and it is fitting that his death should close these introductory pages. A tiny book of consolation for the young man's death written by his father has survived. Like many of du Plessis' writings it was translated into English, under the title of "The Lord of Plessis, his teares," and the quaint and carefully balanced sentences of the panegyric can be read in contemporary language. "Philip Morney, Philip's sonne, making an enterprise under the Grave Maurice upon the Citty of Gueldre, having broken open the first and second gate, and bending all his power and endeavour against the laste, with a musket shot was struck through the brest, and fel; leaving behind him the reward of his virtues, included in the world's general lamentation for him, as he had possessed it with honourable hopes of him. Hee was born at Antwerp in his father's Embassage, 1579 the 20 day of Julie: and was made immortall, 1605, the 23 day of October. . . . Grace Hirselse was the grace women, the midwife that received him from his mother, and attended his first

hour of birth : so did Pietie his infancy, Learning his childhood, Vertue his youth, Honestie his fuller growth and firmer age. And yet so kinde was this contention of the corporall and mentall virtues, being all enranged and enrooted in him, that neither did his strength make him decline unto pride, his good shape unto loosenesse, his learning to vanitie, his valour to cruelty, or his love of uprightnesse unto any sowrenesse of manners : his towardnesse so happily prevented his education ; his fruit stept in before his flower, and true gravitie took place in his heart, ere any little downe had spread itself on his face." The book, for all its formal language, breathes a real agony of sorrow, and the little that is known of the younger Philip justifies the deep grief of his parents. His death was the last trouble his mother had to bear for she did not long survive him. At least she must have felt that he had not been unworthy of her hero, his father, although he did not live "to finish that which I have begun to write concerning our lives".

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CHAPTER I

EARLY YEARS AND EDUCATION

PHILIPPE DE MORNAY was born at Buhy, in the French Vexin on Nov. 5th 1549, two hours before the dawn, and was baptized the 11th day of the same month. His father was Messire Jacques de Mornay, chevalier and lord of Buhy, and his mother was Dame Françoise de Bec Crespin, daughter of Messire Charles de Bec,¹ vice-admiral of France, and of Dame Madeleine de Beauvillier, daughter of the Count of Saint-Aignan and of Antoinette de la Trémouille. His godfathers were Messire Philippe de Roncherolles, baron of Heuqueville, and his paternal uncle, Messire Bertin de Mornay, *granddoyen* of Beauvais and abbé of Saumur au Boz near Boulogne. His godmothers were his maternal great-aunt, Madame Jehanne de Beauvillier, Lady of Puyset and of du Plessis Marly, and Dame de la Neuville, Lady of Morvillier. His nurse, whom I should be loth to forget, was Marguerite Madon, a native of Buhy, a woman of a sweet nature. The late M. de Buhy, his father, lived a blameless life to the age of forty-eight, never once failing to play his part in the wars and to do his service to his King. But the wars once over he retired to his own house, indifferent alike to court life and ambition, although opportunities for both were not lacking. He loved horses, and in peace,

¹ Charles de Bec Crespin, Seigneur de Bourri and de Wardes, Vice-Admiral of France.

as in war, always kept a good establishment ; he took his pleasure with his friends and neighbours and was considered by all to be a very honest and scrupulous man as times then were ; he was a devout worshipper in the Roman Church and brought up his children to be the same ; he loved the poor and was liberal to them ; above all things he hated lying and swearing ; and thus he lived in sweet and honest converse with all men. He died in the year 1559 on the last day of November. God gave him grace at his death to call to mind the many words of good purport which were daily spoken by his wife concerning the errors of the Roman Church which were not unknown to her, and he would have neither priest nor any superstitious ceremony, feeling full assurance of his salvation by the sole passion of Jesus Christ. He was visited, aided and admonished during his illness by M. d'Ambleville and M. de Villarceaux, father and son, his near relatives and bearing the same surname, and also by Master Antoine Quarré, a doctor of Gisors and by Mademoiselle de Buhy, his wife, who had herself called them all in, knowing that they were instructed in the true faith. Thus he passed from this life into that of the blessed on the eve of St Andrew at the hour of noon. His body was buried at Buhy where it lies at rest till the last day. He made no will, telling Mademoiselle de Buhy, his wife, that he left his children and his house in her care in full confidence.

This same Dame Françoise de Bec, his wife, was thus left a widow at the age of twenty-nine, having been married at sixteen and having borne her husband ten children, of whom four sons and two daughters were living, all very young. Now for the past six or seven years she had had her eyes opened to the errors of the Papacy and had longed to profess the reformed religion. But the fires of persecution were still at that time alight in France and terror for the ruin of her house made her dissemble, the more so as M. de Buhy, her husband, was not of one mind with her. She often spoke with him on the subject and some-

times he would find her reading the Bible or the Psalms or some other book, at which he never showed any displeasure; merely warning her not to bring him into trouble seeing how cruel the times were. So now being a widow she had no wish to make any sudden change nor to declare herself openly before the funeral ceremonies and obsequies were over. And when the late M. d'Ambleville, father of M. de Villarceaux, cadet of the Mornay family, and Madame de Villarceaux, his daughter-in-law, told her how wrong she was, knowing the errors of Rome, to go on practising them and this all the more because her late husband had scorned its superstitions at his death, she replied that she had no mind to begin with the funeral ceremonies lest it should be said that she did it to save the twelve or fifteen hundred crowns they would cost her. This being so she observed all the ordinary mourning and ceremonies. Later on and little by little she left off going to mass, now on the pretext of her mourning, now on that of ill-health, but she continued to send her children, more especially the younger ones. At length warned by God in a grievous illness she and all her children made public profession in the year 1560, and ever after she persevered in the same faith in spite of wars, persecutions and massacres. Nor did she spare to do everything that lay in her power for even in the time of the St Bartholomew, when the Scripture was silenced throughout the land, it was still read in her house.

As for her family and household she had always ruled them with much honour and praise from all, and now in her widowhood she continued to spend all her time in building up and taking care of her children's welfare, in which she took a singular pleasure all the days of her life. She married one of the daughters left to her, Françoise de Mornay, to Anthony le Sénéchal, Seigneur d'Auber-ville, a scion of one of the oldest families of Normandy who professed the true religion, of which marriage there were several children. She has still two sons left to her and at this very hour when I write she is busied in

dividing the property of the late M. de Buhy and her own between them, they having come to an agreement together and having begged her to be their sole arbitrator, so that, when it should please God to call her, they can live in the same friendship which has lasted unbroken through her lifetime and can each retire to live in peace in his own house at her death.

The elder is M. Pierre de Mornay, Seigneur de Buhy, etc., who married Dame Anne d'Enlezy, sole heiress of a good family in Bourbonnais, and whose father owned a great deal of land in Normandy which she inherited. The second son is Philippe de Mornay, lord of Plessis, etc., my highly honoured lord and husband, about whom I have a mind to write, with God's help, as a means of strengthening our posterity in their fear of God and in their hope in Him after we are gone hence.

Now Philippe, after having been reared under the care of his foster-mother in his father's house up to the age of five, was placed in the charge of one Adrian, priest of Beauvais, so that he might be taught reading and writing and the rudiments of latin. At that time it was under consideration whether Philippe should enter the Church; and this was all the more likely because Messire Bertin de Mornay, *granddoyen* of Beauvais and abbé of Saumur near Boulogne, who enjoyed over 20,000 livres in benefices, was very fond of the child and was willing to resign them all in his favour. But God, not wishing that Philippe should be plunged into idolatry, removed this temptation by the death of his uncle, the *granddoyen*, who died in his abbey of Saumur in October 1556. Feeling himself stricken with illness he sent for his brother, M. de Buhy, who went to his aid, but Mademoiselle de Buhy, his sister-in-law, could not go for she was then great with child. The *granddoyen* left his brother sole heir of all his patrimony and bequeathed to his nephew, Philippe de Mornay, all his property which was not entailed, both what he had inherited and what he had since acquired. He showed the greatest regret at dying before he had

done all that he wished and intended to do for his brother and nephews. However M. de Buhy, on account of his grief at the approaching loss of a brother whom he dearly loved, would not allow a word to be said on the subject of the resignation of these benefices; and the sick man himself neither remembered nor spoke of them in spite of the goodwill which he manifested up to his last moment for all his family, and more especially for Philippe de Mornay, who was the only person to whom he bequeathed anything. After his death the late M. de Lizy, Archbishop of Arles (of the house of Monjay), their cousin and very good friend, who had credit at the court, induced the late King Henri (II) to give all the *grand-doyen's* benefices to the late M. Disgue, chancellor to Queen Eleanor of Austria,¹ who was M. de Buhy's maternal uncle, and this he did in the hope that they would thus be secured to Philippe through him. But as M. Disgue was eighty years old M. d'Estrée,² grand-master of the artillery, immediately obtained a grant for their reversion from King Henri II, so that as M. Disgue died two years afterwards without resigning them in favour of his great-nephews they passed out of the Mornay family. Manifestly it was God in His mercy who so ordered things for, having later on come to a knowledge of the true religion, it would have been a great hindrance to that open profession of faith which, by God's help, they made.

At the death of the late Dean M. du Plessis was seven years old. At that time he was in the care of Gabriel Prestat of Sedan in Brie, who taught him, but without appearing to do so, the principles of the true religion of which he himself had knowledge. But he did not openly discuss them, partly because of Philippe's childish age and partly for fear of M. de Buhy, who was ignorant that his son's précepteur was a lutheran, as they were then

¹ Widow of François I, sister of Charles V Emperor.

² Jean, Marquis d'Estrée, 1486-1471. Grandfather of Gabrielle d'Estrée.

called. It was Mademoiselle de Buhy, his mother, who had taken pains, through M. Morel, a learned man in much repute at that time, to engage Maître Prestat, so that her sons might be instructed betimes in the fear of God. He had under his charge Pierre and Philippe de Mornay, her two elder sons (the others were too young), and he also had one of her nephews, George de Bec Crespin, now Seigneur of Bourry. To keep M. de Buhy in ignorance of the religion of the said Prestat and of the instruction that he was giving the boys, after he and his pupils had lived for some time at Buhy, Mlle. de Buhy sent them all to her eldest brother's house, where Prestat was well known, and where M. du Bourry approved of the teaching given to his son and nephews. M. du Plessis made his first efforts in scholarship at Bourry and gave promise that he would make rapid progress. At the age of eight, towards the end of 1557, Philippe was taken to Paris by his father, M. de Buhy, and placed in the College of Lisieux, in the charge of Maître Paschal Diepart, who is at present practising as an advocate at Rouen. He belonged to the Roman Church and instructed Philippe in its practices. Not long after Maître Diepart betook himself to the study of the law and left his pupil in the hands of Maître Marin Liberge, a native of Mantes, now *docteur régent* at Angers; this Maître Liberge, besides being himself devoted to the Roman religion, had in his house a canon named La Chapelle who never let a day pass without hearing M. du Plessis recite his hours and vigils, and so imbued the boy with these observances that he became very diligent in them of his own accord. M. de Buhy, coming to Paris observed his son carefully and bade him grow up a worthy man and to go daily to Mass, in which the whole of religion seemed to consist. He was at this college for two years but his studies were greatly interrupted by illnesses so that he never got beyond the fourth form.

On his father's death Mlle. de Buhy sent for him so that he might take his part in the funeral ceremonies

and the mourning for the late M. de Buhy, his father. She chose for his escort a certain Maître Jean de Luz, a priest and since Curate of Magny, who, suspecting that Mlle. de Buhy had no love for the Roman religion, began to sermonize and admonish M. du Plessis on their way home bidding him to remain a good catholic and to live as he had been taught and not to be led astray by his mother's lutheran opinions. This talk troubled the boy and he answered in his childish way that he certainly wanted to remain a catholic but that if he were troubled in his mind he would read attentively in the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles, and would conform himself with what he found therein. Thereupon Maître Jean de Luz made answer that if he did so he would assuredly be lost, and that he must content himself with what he had been taught and that reading books was very dangerous. When he reached Buhy he found all his brothers and sisters with his mother. His eldest brother, Pierre de Mornay, now sieur of Buhy, recently returned from his service as page to the late King François II, had been with his mother several times to hear the Word preached at M. de Lizy's house. He had also learnt his catechism and had tried to lend it to his father, but M. de Buhy had refused, being loth to read in any suspect book. He had got hold of a New Testament printed by Rouville of Lyons, in Latin and French, by privilege of the King and with the approbation of the Sorbonne, and in this he diligently studied, seeking to enlighten himself and praying God's help. As he read and re-read he noticed that purgatory and prayers to the saints were never mentioned, whereas idolatry and so forth were expressly forbidden. This made him begin to doubt in other matters and to read not only more carefully but in other books as well, and so little by little he came to a true understanding of the Lord's Supper. Thus, by the grace of God who had turned him to the study of the truth, point after point was searched into, and from the moment that he was enlightened he resolved to

go no more to Mass although his mother did still occasionally attend. Soon after, and a little before the Colloquy of Poissy in 1561, the whole family, by the goodness of God, forsook idolatry and made open profession of that faith in which we all with His help hope to live and die.

About this time M. Philippe de Bec, then Bishop of Vannes and nowadays of Nantes, was awakened to a knowledge of some of the abuses of the Roman Church, and he spoke with some freedom on the subject to his sister, Mlle. de Buhy, even lending her certain books which he had formerly brought from England. The bishop was fond of his nephew, M. du Plessis, and thought well of him and intended to resign a part of his benefices in his favour, and so when the boy first went to college he had been dressed as if he were intended for the church. But from the moment that God had opened his eyes even a little to the abuses of the church, Philippe would hear no more talk of taking orders. Some time after his father's death he returned to Paris to the house of M. Prébet who lived at the back of Boncourt College. He entered the second class and made good progress, and this without taking part in any act of idolatry. Several children of good family were brought up together there, among others the cadets of Rambouillet and Bellenave. But once more, by an ill-luck which seemed to pursue his studies, he could only follow them for two months for in consequence of the troubles which started again in France in 1562¹ pressure was put on his conscience. In the case of his school-fellows this was successful, but he decided to let his mother know at once. She immediately sent Crespin Gualtrin, her receiver, and some of her servants to bring him home. This Crespin was attached to M. du Plessis, because, in the lifetime of his father, he had been selected to be the guardian of his property on the occasion of the purchase of Ouatimesnil by his uncle the Dean in his nephew's name and for the boy's profit. As a plague was then raging in Paris, and

¹ Massacre at Vassy, 1st March 1562.

as even in the very house two of his school-fellows had died of it, M. Prébet physicked M. du Plessis so severely that he was very ailing in consequence. Notwithstanding his condition he set out the very next day, with a Greek primer tucked between his tunic and his shoulders. On account of the troubles the city gates were guarded. As they were undergoing an interrogation at the Porte St Honoré there chanced to pass by the Corpus Domini, as they call it, on its way to a sick man. M. du Plessis slipped through as nimbly as he could, but if the said Crespín, who was a catholic, had not knelt in adoration he might not have escaped so easily, for every one knows that in those days men and women were killed in Paris by the mob on the merest breath of suspicion. He reached Buhy and immediately fell ill of a severe attack of pleurisy which was followed by a wasting fever. He was then thirteen years old. The doctors attending him thought the illness was caused by the fatigue of the journey following on the severe purging to which he had been subjected and which had heated his blood. His illness lasted nearly three months and during it his mother was obliged to leave her house, on account of the troubles, and to take refuge with Mlle. de Montagny, her maternal aunt, who lived a league away from Buhy. She had with her the six children still left to her, four of whom were ill, and her two nephews, M. du Bourry's sons. She took them all, Philippe and Anne de Mornay accompanying her in her own coach as they were the most ill. The whole family stayed at Montagny till the troubles were over and during the whole of the time all her children and both her nephews were ill. M. du Plessis' illness again interrupted his studies and made him forget all that he had hitherto learnt. Seeing which, and he being then thirteen years old, his mother thought of making him into a page, but he begged and prayed her so earnestly not to do this that she abandoned the project, for above all things he longed to get back to his studies.

Taking his wishes into consideration she next thought of placing him with the Chevalier d'Angoulême,¹ since *Grand prieur* of France, who was carrying out his studies in M. Morel's house, in the hope that M. du Plessis might acquire learning and good manners at one and the same time. But at last she yielded to his persistence and she sent him back to Paris. She engaged as his tutor M. Lazare Ramigny, a native of Linsle in the mountains of Nice, in Provence, a religious and a learned man but vehement in his temper like all his countrymen. He was recommended by M. Mercier, the King's Professor in the Hebrew tongue. M. du Plessis set seriously to make up for time lost through his illnesses and the troubles. Inasmuch as he had to begin over again almost at the very beginning he should have gone to a private college where the lessons are not so difficult, but seeing how tall he was grown he was ashamed to do this. Accordingly he attended the public lectures, and worked so hard during the next three or four years that he overtook, and even outstripped, those of his own age.

Half-way through the four years that he spent at Paris his maternal uncle, the Bishop of Nantes,² arrived in the city. After testing him in his knowledge of Greek by glancing through several books, his uncle discussed the question of religion with him. Since the troubles began the Bishop had been to the Council of Trent with the Cardinal de Lorraine³ and had stifled the knowledge which he had formerly had of the truth. He told M. du Plessis that he had no wish to press him before he was come to a riper judgment, but that his opinions on religion would change with age. M. du Plessis answered, "Sir, if it is nothing but an opinion it would be better to change it at once. I am quite ready to receive instruction and to justify my faith." And at that time no more was said. But on the morrow the Bishop told him that he

¹ Henri d'Angoulême, son of Henri II and Lady Flemming.

² Philippe de Bec, Bishop of Nantes, 1566-1594, Archbishop of Rheims, 1598-1605.

³ Charles de Lorraine, 2nd son of Claude, Duc de Guise, 1524-1574.

wanted him to read in the Fathers and that he would see that a bookseller lent him the books. Some days later he spoke of resigning his bishopric in his nephew's favour, and until he attained canonical age, he proposed to make over to him the *prévôté* of Vertou, which he could hold without making any change in religion, on the mere strength of the tonsure he already wore as a student. M. du Plessis thanked him, but said that God would not let him want for anything, for he was loth to lay himself under an obligation to his uncle, lest it should prove a stumbling-block and a reason for following his uncle's counsels. After the Bishop's return to Brittany M. du Plessis wrote to him once a fortnight, dwelling on those passages in the writings of the Fathers, which he diligently read as directed, which confirmed him more and more in the chief points of the (reformed) religion.

At this same time M. de Menneville, the youngest of the Heuqueville family, was studying in Paris and was sometimes to be seen at M. de Longueville's ¹ house. One day when there, in the presence of the duke's mother, the Marquise de Rothelin ² who was of our religion, he boasted that he could defeat the most learned huguenot ministers in a disputation. This boast made her ask if there were no scholar of his own age and rank who would hold an argument with him. M. du Plessis was mentioned, and so she sent for him and told him of her wish. When he heard who was the other disputant he told her they were related but that as it was for religion, and was moreover a discussion in all friendliness, he would not allow the relationship to be a bar. She gathered together a company at her own house, the Hôtel Rothelin near les Enfants Rouges, among whom was M. de Longueville her son, the Marquis de Rothelin, ³ the count de Rochefort,

¹ Léonor d'Orléans succeeded his uncle François III, Duc de Longueville, 1551.

² Jacqueline de Rohan, widow of François d'Orléans, Marquis de Rothelin.

³ François d'Orléans, illegitimate half-brother of Léonor, Duc de Longueville.

M. d'Entragues and several more. The discussion opened on Purgatory, the subject having been set several days beforehand, but after arguments on the one side and the other, M. de Rochefort stopped the disputation, not caring to have it carried further on this point. But as it was only fair to see which of the two had studied best, books in Hebrew, Greek and Mathematics were produced and M. de Menneville had to confess that his studies had not gone so far as M. du Plessis'. Next, the "Timaeus" of Plato was brought forward and discussed till night fell and brought the meeting to a close, since which event M. de Menneville has always felt a certain grudge against M. du Plessis.

CHAPTER II

THE GRAND TOUR : 1567-1572

IN the year 1567, shortly before the troubles of St Denis, as they are called, broke out and because of their obvious approach, M. du Plessis left Paris for Buhy. He wanted to join in the war under his uncles, M. de Bourry and M. de Wardes, who were among the first to take service and who were in the very vanguard of the army. But his mother would not permit it thinking it was enough to let his elder brother, M. de Buhy, go as cornet to M. de Wardes. He was the first in the charge at the battle of St Denis, at the side of D'Aubervillier and in front of M. de Genlis. M. de Genlis retired to Soissons and M. de Wardes, after bringing his nephew home, went to Normandy to try and rouse the party for the Religion round about his own country; as they met with no success, they sought for some way by which they might recross the Seine and join the army before Chartres. M. du Plessis again importuned his mother for leave to go with them, which she at length gave. But God, who willed otherwise, did not permit his studies to come to an end so soon. For he had scarcely left home and was still in one of their own villages called Buschet when his horse fell on him and broke his leg in two places. So back home he went and could not use the limb for three months so that he had to be carried from place to place, because of the King's army which was camped in the neighbourhood of Buhy. During this illness he amused himself with writing a lament on the civil wars in France in French verse, which, when peace was made, he gave to the Cardinal of Chatillon, together with

several sonnets in praise of the three brothers Coligny. This youthful effort was lost when the Cardinal's library was pillaged at Bresles near Beauvais. Peace was signed at Chartres, though, as every one knows, it was a peace which was almost worse than war, and was moreover of short duration.

During this brief respite he obtained his mother's consent, with some difficulty, to travel in the charge of his tutor, the aforementioned Lazare Ramigny. This journey was not undertaken without extreme danger, on account of the disturbed condition of every town through which they passed. To give instances, they narrowly escaped assassination as they left Paris by the Porte St Marceau, and again at Montargis, so full of doubts and fears was every one; then at Nevers they were recognized by some of the Duke's men as belonging to the Religion and as the Duke was at that time at the height of his sufferings from the wound which he had got in the recent civil war they were in peril there. Next they had great difficulty in getting out of Lyons, as M. de Birague, at that time Governor of the Lyonnais, refused them passports. So they had to watch to see at what hour the guard at the Gate was changed, and then to slip out at the moment when the change was made. So at last they reached Geneva towards the middle of August 1568, about the same time that the Prince de Condé¹ left Noyers to retire to La Rochelle. They stayed but a short time in Geneva because of the plague and so passing through Switzerland into Germany, they reached Frankfort. He spent the winter at Heidelberg in the house of M. Emmanuel Tremelius, a Christian and a man learned in many languages but excelling in Hebrew. M. du Plessis worked hard at German, which he learnt more by study than by conversation so as to escape the society of Germans, with whom it is difficult to mix without drinking too much. However he got on so well that by the end of six months there was not a book which

¹ Louis de Bourbon, Prince de Condé, 1530-1569.

he had not read and understood. He also made a beginning in the study of law and was familiar with the most learned men in all professions, although he listened more to their friendly talk than to their lectures.

The year 1567 found him at Frankfort at the time of the September Fair, where he made the acquaintance of M. Hubert Languet, by nationality a Burgundian and well known in our time for his piety, doctrine and virtue, and also for having been employed on various important embassies to most of the Princes of Christendom. M. du Plessis got a great deal of useful information from him on the conduct of his travels. The friendship then formed lasted till the last hour of M. Languet's life, who, as he lay dying, spoke of M. du Plessis as a loving father might speak of an only son. With his last words he told me that he had never loved anyone so much, and he would feel himself only too happy, if I would promise to ask my husband (for he was at that time absent) on his behalf, that in the first book which M. du Plessis should publish he should say that they had been friends, and that he held M. Languet in honour. It is this request which made M. du Plessis add a brief epistle to the latin translation of his book on "The Truth of the Christian Religion," in which he made worthy mention of his old friend.

After seeing the fair at Frankfort he left that city and went by way of Switzerland and the Grisons to Italy. Through an introduction from M. Languet he became acquainted with M. de Foix,¹ at that time the King's ambassador to the Signory of Venice, but who was soon after succeeded by M. du Ferrier.² Both M. de Foix and M. du Ferrier loved him well, and their friendship still holds, and so long as the wars for the religion which he openly confessed lasted in France there was no Frenchman with whom they were more intimate than with him.

¹ Paul de Foix, 1528-1584, Ambassador to Venice, England and Rome. Archbishop of Toulouse, 1577.

² Arnand du Ferrier, 1508-1585.

His first stay was at Padua where he went on with his legal studies, but privately more than by attending the public lectures for it seemed to him that the Italian doctors lectured rather to display their own learning than to teach their scholars. Besides his studies he did not neglect to practise the use of his weapons and other exercises. He also continued other subjects of study besides the law, and, so as to leave no hour idle, took great pleasure in the evenings in acquiring a knowledge of simples. Since the signing of a league between the Pope, the King of Spain and the Venetians against the Turk, the Signory had allowed the Pope and his ministers to exercise more authority than was customary, and in consequence the Bishop of Padua, a member of the Pisani family, began to make more diligent inquiry after heretics than heretofore. M. du Plessis, therefore, feeling himself too well known through various disputations and conferences in which he had taken part on various occasions and with different people, left for Venice. He spent six or seven months there living on very familiar terms with M. du Ferrier, the Ambassador, and had enjoyed many a talk with him on Hebrew, the reformed religion and other subjects. Another friend of his was M. de Mezières, also known as François Perrot Parisien, a man of rare piety and sound doctrine, who had been employed in honourable service by more than one king. This friendship lasts between them at the present day.

But even at Venice he met with more than one little difficulty, on account of his religion. Among others one day the Signors of the Inquisition, who were four gentlemen deputed by the Signory to inquire into such matters, sent for him requiring him to take an oath on certain articles. He answered, in Italian, that his religion would not allow him to do so. The Commissary, mistaking the meaning of the word religion as used by M. du Plessis, asked him if he was a "religious", meaning to say a monk, thinking he was too young. He replied that

there were others even younger than he, and so they acted on his reply and no more was heard of the matter. All the same he did not intend to deceive them, but rather to explain his creed openly and give reasons for his faith. Another time, on an Easter morning, he went with M. du Ferrier's secretary to the Palace on certain matters of business. The Doge and the whole Signory were standing in full state in the courtyard under the Gallery just by the little door which leads into St Mark's. I have often heard him describe how the Sacrament, as they call it, was borne out of St Mark's accompanied by a little crowd of all sorts of people in the Italian fashion, on its way to Sebastian Zeni, then a prisoner in the Palace. The Doge, the Signory and the crowd of nobles all threw themselves on their knees, while he alone remained standing, with his head covered, in their midst. Some of them stared at him but nobody made a trouble over it. He met with several such little affairs while in Italy, from which he extracted himself without offence to his conscience through God's grace. I have often heard him say that he was never more full of zeal for his religion, nor more careful of his conduct, so that he might give no cause for scandal to those of his companions and friends who knew him to belong to the reformed church. He made friends with M. Calignon,¹ who, at that time, was still sunk in the abuses of the papacy, although he was not without some knowledge of the Truth. Their talk was mainly on religion for M. du Plessis sought to encourage and enlighten him; since those days M. Calignon has done much good work for the reformed churches, and notably for those in Dauphiné; and in very truth he is a man gifted with fine and rare qualities.

M. du Plessis made ready to leave Venice for the Levant, but he got no further than the coast of Istria and Dalmatia because of the war of Cyprus which broke out just then and made it dangerous for Christians to travel further east. In 1571 he left Venice and started on a

¹ Soffrey de Calignon, 1550-1606, afterwards Chancellor of Navarre.

tour round Italy, going by the Adriatic coast and returning by way of Tuscany to Genoa. Wherever he went he inquired very thoroughly into what there was to see, so that nothing might escape him. To this end he had read all the best histories he could find during any prolonged stay that he made in a town, both particular and general histories of Italy as a whole and of its states, principalities and republics as well ; nor did he stop short, as most do, at seeing the antiquities of each place, but he also studied their chances and changes, their beginnings, births, progress, growth and the causes of these things, together with the spots where battles had been fought and sieges laid and assaults given, all of which he very fully recorded in Italian in a manuscript which he left with others in the hands of M. Jean Metellus, a Burgundian of Franche Comté, from whom I have so far failed to recover any of them. He followed the same method in all his travels in Germany, Hungary, the Low Countries and England, and he and I are both trying to get all these records together for the use of our children. During this tour he passed by Ferrara, which was still feeling earthquake shocks, and he stayed there several days so as to observe and inquire into the circumstances of these shocks which had lasted seven or eight months, and were the worst ever felt there. From there he went on to Rome, and on the way often lodged in the same inns with friars of the order known as Cordeliers, many of whom were travelling to Rome for their general synod. He could hardly do this without often entering into dangerous conversations on affairs in France which was only just emerging from the recent troubles and wars about the religion ; as indeed happened at Ancona, a town in the March subject to the Pope, with an abbé who was travelling to Loretto. As the only way to avoid idolatry he was forced to slip off secretly from his companion by the old post-road, which nobody took because it was a sort of crime to pass by Loretto without saluting the shrine. At Spoleto he was in danger because, at the end of an earthquake which had gone on

for two months, a Madonna was set up in imitation of Loretto, on the outskirts of the town, which was said to weep and work miracles and to have saved the town from destruction by earthquakes by her tears. The people came in battalions from the neighbouring towns, marching under crucifixes as if they were banners, and those who did not salute them were in danger of their lives, which might have befallen him more than once whilst travelling by that road. But God saved him in time because, just as he was passing through Spoleto, an edict of Pope Pius V was published which, on account of certain impostures which had been discovered, forbade all pilgrimages on pain of excommunication, till the miracles had been duly proved and approved. Notwithstanding this edict some of the crowd as he passed in front of the shrine seized his stirrups to make him dismount, but when he refused they dared not use force on account of the Pope's edict. The fame of this idolatry spread all through Italy and many marvels were told of the idol. But although he heard tell of this or that blind or lame man who had been cured, he always found, on inquiry, that it had happened in the next village further on, while among all those whom he questioned he never found one to give thanks for himself. He mentioned this some time after to the Duke of Savoy¹ when he visited his court, and the Duke, who had heard of the miracles, was troubled at this remark.

Now, whether M. du Plessis had been denounced from Venice or Padua where he had stayed, or whether he had laid himself open to suspicion in his talks with the friars with whom he fell in on his way, it is certain that on the second night after his arrival in Rome, where he put up at the Boar, the Bargello, or Captain of the Watch, came to his lodgings and asked his name, country, business, whence he came, whither he was going and so on. He answered nothing but the truth although he gave his family name of Philippe de Mornay instead of du Plessis,

¹ Philibert Emmanuel, m. Marguerite de France, d. François I.

the name by which he was generally known. His servants were lodged in an adjoining wardrobe room and in order that they should not contradict him but should conform to his answers he spoke in a loud voice, which they overheard and so made their answers agree with his when their turn came to be questioned. So the Bargello went away but two hours later he came back and began his inquiries all over again. This redoubled M. du Plessis' alarm and he was on the very point of jumping from the window in an effort to escape ; however by the grace of God he made a bold answer and the guard again retired. When morning came he slipped off to Tivoli and kept out of the way for a few days and then came back to Rome to see everything that his first hurried visit had not given him time to see. At Milan and Cremona, both towns belonging to the King of Spain, he ran similar risks. Once being questioned by some very inquisitive Spaniards one of them told him that all Frenchmen were Lutherans, to which he replied that it was just as if one said all Spaniards were Moors. This started a discussion, the man declaring that lutherans were worse than Jews, and as, when they left the table, the Spaniard went off to find the Inquisitor of Cremona, a great persecutor, M. du Plessis, warned by God, went off to Piacenza in a hurry and kept out of the way there. He also visited the court of Savoy where he made himself agreeable to the Duchess and several other people of importance, but without putting himself forward. And so having finished his tour of Italy he returned to Venice. Throughout his journey he paid his respects to the learned men in each town, of whatever faculty or profession, but above all those who had any knowledge of the truth so that he might comfort himself with them.

From Venice he took his way by Trent, Innsbruck and Linz and reached Vienna in time for the wedding of the Archduke Charles with his niece, the daughter of the King of Bavaria. From there, furnished with the proper passports, he went on into Hungary, where he was very

well received by all the governors and where he pursued his usual method for getting acquainted with notable persons and places. He continued his journey through Moravia, Bohemia, Misnia, Thuringia, Hesse, Franconia, etc., so that he ended at Frankfort once more at the September Fair 1571, and there decided to spend the winter at Cologne. In the course of this winter he became very intimate with Petrus Ximenes,¹ the great Spanish theologian, a modest and sincere man in intention if not in faith. In many points of doctrine they agreed but Ximenes had entrenched himself in the belief in the visible Church, from which he thought it wrong to differ however great were the errors into which she fell. M. du Plessis begged him to put into writing his principal reasons for this belief, and afterwards refuted them in a little paper in latin which those in Cologne called *Scriptum Triduanum*. It passed through many hands but it was never printed. The said Ximenes asked for time to write his answer but he never wrote it although often earnestly solicited by his friends. In Cologne M. du Plessis also knew Charles de Boisot, since Governor of Zealand, and his brother who was afterwards Admiral of the same country where they were both held in high esteem ; and the lords of Rhumen, Mansard and Ohain who had fled from the persecutions and burnings of those who professed the reformed religion in the Low Countries. He was acquainted too with a learned man a Burgundian of Franche Comté, called Metellus, driven away not because of the reformed religion, which indeed he did not profess, but because of the Cardinal de Granvelle's hatred for him. Familiarity with these people brought him into touch with affairs in the Low Countries, which soon after began to move by the taking of Brielle, Flushing and Camfer, and above all by the base treachery of the Spaniards in Rotterdam.² M. du Plessis wrote two remonstrances on this latter

¹ Petrus Ximenes, b. at Middelburg 1514, of Portuguese parents.

² Massacre by the Spaniards 1571.

event, which were scattered all over the Low Countries both in French and in Flemish. The first was to induce them to refuse to admit garrisons ; the second, following their refusal, to show how little the Spaniards could be trusted after their recent treachery ; and these two papers were not without fruit. They were sent to the Prince of Orange, then at Dillenbourg, although they were not seen by him till eight years later. From this time forth in all negotiations with the Low Countries he was absolutely trusted. He passed the winter in reading Canon Law and the Fathers, in attending discussions on the religion and in writing various papers, which for the most part remained in the hands of the aforesaid Metellus, from whom I have never been able to get them. He also wrote a commentary on the Salic and Ripuarian Laws, which might yet be recovered from Metellus, in which he explained all the foreign words, or at least those not latin, which he found there.

In the spring of 1572 he went into the Low Countries, where he made a very careful study of the country, even finding means of getting into the castles and garrisoned places, because it seemed likely that King Charles would declare war against the King of Spain. Thence he crossed over into England, though not without great danger, just at the time when Mons was taken and the whole country was in an uproar. Shortly after his arrival in England the late M. du Montmorenci¹ and M. de Foix came across, to take the oath to a league between the late King Charles and the Queen of England.

He composed a poem addressed to the Queen, of which sixty verses were lost because he had torn them up and hidden them in different places on account of their dangerous character and of the searchings and persecutions that went on under the Duke of Alva ; and he could never rewrite them. The poem might have had eight hundred verses and invoked her aid for the ruin

¹ François duc de Montmorenci, Marshal of France, 1530-1579, eldest son of the Connétable de Montmorenci.

of Anti-christ and the establishment of the true Church. Whilst he was in England he was asked if he would visit the Queen of Scotland on behalf of King Charles, but he refused fearing lest he might be asked to carry letters prejudicial to the affairs of England, and, in consequence, to the Religion.

And so towards the end of July he reached France, and having spent a few days at Buhy with his mother, he went on to Paris to join the late Admiral Coligny. He told the Admiral everything that he had observed in the Low Countries, all of which was communicated to the King. Next he presented a remonstrance on the justice, utility and facility of a war against the King of Spain, which paper was afterwards printed very incorrectly in the *Memoires de France*. After all which the late Admiral proposed that he should join the Prince of Orange who was moving about with his army, and assure him that succour was coming from the King; this plan was speedily abandoned owing to the defeat of M. de Genlis on his way to Mons. M. du Plessis was very resolute in his determination to reach the Prince of Orange in spite of all dangers, and wanted to disguise himself as a peasant. When the Admiral discussed the matter with him, for the Admiral had been advised by M. Languet that M. du Plessis was worthy of confidence ✓ in spite of his twenty-three years, he told him that he held himself ready not for gain or advancement, seeing how great was the risk, but because he felt assured he would employ him in nothing that would not be for the glory of God, who would guide him so long as he served Him. The massacre of the 24th of August, St Bartholomew's Day, brought this and many other matters to naught.

M. du Plessis arrived in France some three weeks before the massacre on St Bartholomew's Day¹ took place, and I have often heard him say that he expected no good to come out of the condition of affairs. Even on the King of Navarre's wedding-day he scarcely went out, so

¹ 24th August 1572.

little did he rejoice in it. Certain warnings were given him too, which he passed on but without doing any good. On the Friday before St Bartholomew's Day he had obtained three days' leave of absence from the Admiral, and was ready to start for Buhy with his mother who was then in Paris, but whilst he was at M. de Foix's house, bidding him good-bye, one of his servants, a German called Eberhard Blanclz, came to tell him that the Admiral had been wounded. He ran to the spot, met the Admiral and accompanied him back to his lodgings, and from this moment felt all his forebodings of approaching evil redoubled. Notwithstanding which, and in spite of all Mlle. de Buhy's prayers and commands, he made up his mind to give up his journey and await the issue of events, as God might ordain them. But he made her leave Paris immediately by telling her how certain he was of the coming danger, so that she set out on the eve of that miserable day towards four o'clock in the afternoon, and slept at Pontoise, half-way to her own home. He felt he could not himself shun the danger with honour while the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, the Admiral, and so many of the great nobles stayed behind.

On the Saturday evening M. du Plessis came home very late from the Admiral's house and had warnings given him that certain of the citizens were arming themselves. His lodging was in the Rue St Jacques, at the sign of the Golden Compass. On this Saturday, the morrow of the attack on the Admiral, he had retained another lodging, nearer to those of the Admiral, so that he might go in and out more easily at any hour of the day or night. God willed that this new lodging could not be got ready for him before the following Monday. On the Sunday morning at five o'clock the aforementioned German, whom he had sent to the Admiral's lodging, came running back terrified, to warn him of the uproar which was going on there. M. du Plessis jumped up and hastily dressed himself, intending to go there himself,

but various encounters on the way sent him back to his lodging. His host was called Poret (he yet lives) a Roman Catholic, but a man of conscience too. Search was made for M. du Plessis in this man's house and he had barely time to burn his papers. He himself got in between two roofs and did not come out till he heard the searchers leave. The rest of the day he passed with what patience he could, and in the meantime he sent to M. de Foix's house, on whose friendship he knew he could rely, to beg him to help him escape. But M. de Foix had taken shelter in the Louvre, not even he feeling safe in his own house.

On Monday morning the fury beginning again, his host came to him and begged him to leave, saying that he could do nothing to save him, while on the other hand M. du Plessis might be his ruin, although he would not have minded this if he could have really kept him safe. The murderers were already in his next neighbour's house, one Odet Petit, a bookseller, whom they had killed and thrown out of the window.

On hearing this M. du Plessis put on a very plain black suit and took his sword, and left while the mob were busy sacking the neighbouring house, and so passed into the Rue St Martin and got into a little alley known as the *Trousse Vache* to the house of a *huissier*, named Gerard, who was the Buhy family's man of business. The way there was long and M. du Plessis did not reach the Alley without several dangerous encounters. He found the *huissier* standing at his door and was welcomed by him, and just at the right time too for at that moment a captain of the watch passed. The *huissier* promised to get him out of Paris the following morning. M. Gerard then set him to work with his other clerks. The worst was that his servants, although he had not mentioned where he was going to take refuge, guessed where he was and came, one after the other, to look for him, and were noticed going into the house. Thereupon that night the captain of the watch sent to the *huissier* with orders

to send the stranger who was with him to him. The *huissier* was frightened and very early in the morning he came to M. du Plessis and begged him to go away. M. du Plessis made up his mind to go, however great was the risk, and this was on the Tuesday morning. He left his old tutor, M. Raminy, behind for fear lest they should run into more danger together than they would apart.

As he was coming down the stairs all alone, for the *huissier* would not listen to any proposal that he should bear him company out of the town, one of the clerks offered his services of his own free will, saying that he could get M. du Plessis through the Porte St Martin because he had formerly belonged to the guard there, and was well known. M. du Plessis was overjoyed at the offer, but when he got downstairs he saw the man had only slippers on his feet, and he begged him to get his shoes for he did not look fit for going on a journey ; but the man said it was no matter and M. du Plessis did not like to urge him. As ill-luck would have it, the Porte St Martin was not open that morning and they were obliged to go on to the Porte St Denis, where the clerk had no acquaintance. After answering many questions they were allowed to pass on the information that M. du Plessis belonged to Rouen, that he was clerk to a *procureur*, and was on his way to spend his holidays with his relations. But one of the guard caught sight of the clerk's slippers and gave it as his opinion that he was not going far away in that condition, and that the man was probably a Roman Catholic helping a huguenot to escape. Thereupon four soldiers were sent after them who arrested them near to Villette between Paris and St Denis. Immediately a furious mob gathered, carters and quarrymen and lime-burners from the quarries and kilns in the neighbourhood. God preserved them in this first onslaught, and from the blows of the mob, but even while M. du Plessis tried to turn aside their wrath with soft words, they dragged them towards the river. The clerk began to lose his head and swore again and again,

in these very words, that M. du Plessis was no huguenot. Forgetting that they had agreed to say he was a *procureur's* clerk, he even called him M. de Buhy, a family which was well known in the neighbourhood of Paris. God shut their ears so that they heeded him not. M. du Plessis was certain that nobody knew who he was and he begged them to consider how vexed they would be if they killed a man by mistake, and he told them he could give them good references in Paris, and that they ought to put him into some house in the neighbourhood, guarding him well and in the meantime send some of their number to the addresses which he would give them. At length some of the less infuriated among them agreed to this. They took him to an inn in the neighbourhood where he got the innkeeper to serve some breakfast. The gentlest threats were for drowning him. He was on the point of jumping through the window, but, taking all things into consideration, he resolved to brave it out. He gave as references the family of Rambouillet, even mentioning the Cardinal, just to overawe them, knowing well that common people like them would never get a hearing from such high nobility. And in fact they did not think for a moment of taking this suggestion. They put all sorts of questions to him, and the Rouen coach passing at that moment they stopped it to see if any passenger recognized him for a fellow-townsmen, but no one knowing him they decided that he was a liar and again talked of drowning him. As he claimed to be a clerk (as idiots most usually call the learned) they had a Breviary brought to see if he knew latin, and seeing that he did they said that it was enough to infect all Rouen, and that he most certainly should be done away with. Upon which, so as to escape their pestering, he told them that he would answer no more questions, for if he had been ignorant they would have thought ill of him, and now that it was proved that he had some learning they thought worse; and it was clear that they were most unreasonable people and they must do what they thought good.

In the meantime they had sent two of their company to the *huissier* aforementioned, whose address M. du Plessis had given them as one of his references, with a note from him in the following words, "Sir, I am detained by the guard of the Porte St Denis, and by some of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who will not believe that I am Philippe Mornay, your clerk, who has your permission to visit his relations at Rouen during his holidays. I beg you to confirm my statement so that I may be allowed to continue my journey." The messengers found M. Gerard just starting for the Law Courts, a well-dressed and solid looking man. At first he snubbed them but afterwards he wrote on the back of the note that P. Mornay was neither a rebel nor a seditious fellow (he dared not say he was not a huguenot), and this he signed with his name. A little servant-boy in the house nearly spoilt everything by saying that the new clerk only came on the Monday. In the midst of so many difficulties we ought to acknowledge how the divine goodness and providence of God watches over us and for us against all human hope. The note was brought back, and straightway looks and words underwent a change, and M. du Plessis was reconducted to the place where he had been first arrested. So by nine o'clock he parted from them and took his way by St Denis, L'Isle Adam, and thence to Chantilly on foot, where he found M. de Montmorenci. The Marshal was very lukewarm and not without reason. He kept M. du Plessis one day hoping that the King would disavow the murder of the Admiral, in which case he was determined to revenge him; but news to the contrary reaching him he decided to bow to the King's will.

M. du Plessis thereupon set out for Buhy, their family house, on a little horse that M. de Montmorenci lent him, and slept that night at Ivry le Temple, which he reached tired out and drenched. This was on the Thursday after the St Bartholomew when the weather towards evening was most strange (indeed several folk

escaped from Paris under cover of it). At supper-time some of those who were in the same lodgings came into his room cursing and saying there must be a huguenot among them who ought to be in a fine fright, and glanced suspiciously at him. He made no remark and turned away as if he took no interest in what they said, so that matter passed over and he went to his sleeping chamber. The following day he set out for Buhy and on the way there only just missed du Borgne de Montafié and his troopers, who had overrun all the French Vexin and had carried off prisoners some of the gentlemen, his neighbours. This escape was due to his meeting with an old lady called Desseaux, who had been in service with his mother, Mlle. de Buhy, and who was being escorted along the road by a peasant. M. du Plessis and this man recognized each other. The peasant told him to look out and added that they had been stopped by the abovementioned troop not far from where they then were, which was close to Montjavou and a league from Buhy.

At Buhy he found the household all scattered and his mother away. He had news of her at Buchet, a hamlet near to Buhy, from an old serving-man called Saturny, who told him she had fled to the house of M. du Lu, a neighbour of very moderate means. There he found her, and they took comfort together. He told her he intended to leave the country after he had escorted her to M. de Villarceaux's house, where in truth she found a refuge. A few days later M. de Villarceaux' son-in-law, the Baron de Montenay, who was a connection of the de Buhy family, offered to get him a passport from M. de Guise, which would allow him to go wherever he liked. M. du Plessis declined the offer, saying that he would not owe his life to those of whom his conscience forbade him to make use, and that God would open the door to let him get out of France, just as He had opened it to let him escape from the massacre. Three days later he crossed over to England, embarking at Polet, a suburb of Dieppe,

by the help of his brother-in-law, M. Auberville, who employed for that service captain Montiut to whom he was deeply indebted. There was so bad a storm that the sailors talked of putting in at Calais which would have suited them as ill as if they had been carried off to Peru. But God stilled the storm and brought them to the haven of Rye where M. du Plessis was very well received by the English. And his only consolation in this ship was the screams of some women and children who fled the same shipwreck as himself across the waves. This was the 9th day after the massacre. I must add that he often told me that from the very moment when he heard of the massacre he lifted up his heart to God and straightway felt a certain assurance of escape. And not only escape but of justice which has already been made manifest to those who observe the ways of justice carefully. On the other hand, M. Raminy only looked for death and in truth he was slain on Wednesday the 27th August just as he thought he could get out safely by the Porte St Honoré and rejoin M. du Plessis.

CHAPTER III

AN ESCAPE FROM THE MASSACRE OF ST BARTHOLOMEW

AT the time of the massacre I had been living in Paris for two years, detained by the business of settling the division of the property of the late M. de la Borde, along with my mother, my brothers and my sister de Vaucelas. My father died on the 15th August 1570 at the time peace was made after the last troubles before the massacre. In early youth my father had studied, and afterwards had travelled, in Germany and Italy. I remember hearing him say that he had several times listened to preachings in Strasbourg, and had even been present at disputations between Master Martin Luther and other learned doctors. He had thus learnt something of the abuses in the Roman Church, but he had never been instructed in the true religion. He came back to Paris to meet his mother, Dame Magdalene Desfeugerais, and once there he thought no more of seeking religious instruction, but only of getting married and securing some suitable appointment. Shortly afterwards he married Dame Magdalene Chevalier,¹ my mother, by whom he had several children. He also obtained a post as president in the *Chambres des Comptes* of Paris which he filled with integrity. He was beloved by those who did business with him for he hated all gifts, even to refusing fruit and sweets.

A little time before the first troubles began the Prince and Princess of Condé asked my father to let them lodge at his house so as to be near the Louvre, for he lived at la

¹ Great-granddaughter of Etienne Chavalier, for whom Foucquet illuminated the famous "Heures de Chevalier."

Chasse, rue des Bourdonnetz. While the Prince was there preachings were held, and this fact was much commented on, when the first troubles started soon after. It was on this account that my father, who had been ill and who had gone to a little house he possessed at Arcueil, was surrounded by three or four thousand men who had marched out of Paris to take him prisoner. On seeing this mob my father broke open several barrels of wine for the soldiers and asked to speak with their officers. M. Marcel, at that time *Prévôt des Marchands* of Paris, who ever afterwards declared that he accepted the position of leader with the sole object of saving my father's life, was among them. My father handed over to them all his most valuable plate and rings to save them from the pillaging rabble they had with them, who had already seized most of his servants, calling them preachers and huguenots, though of a truth they were all men who went to mass every day and knew nothing of the true religion. My father, thinking to ride with them, was pulled off his horse and dragged to Paris on foot, sometimes with a pistol at his throat and sometimes a dagger, and in this wise was taken to the Faubourg St Marceau where he remained a prisoner. M. de Brissac,¹ at that time Governor of Paris, who was very friendly with my father, promptly set him at liberty, but not before he had abjured the truth, which, after all, was no great matter for him because he had no immediate thought of deserting the mass. At the same time seeing that he could not live safely in Paris he decided to retire to his country house at la Borde, where he stayed throughout the troubles. M. de Guise had a mind to take him and his house by surprise, and did in truth damage his property not a little. The reason for this particular hatred of my father both by M. de Guise and by the Paris populace is to be traced to the preachings in his house in Paris. Besides this the first Sacrament at which the Prince was present was to have been held in the

¹ Charles de Cossé, Comte de Brissac, Marshal of France, 1507-1563.

fields at la Borde, when in that same afternoon the Duke of Guise, whilst crossing the forest on his way to Fontainebleau, met and very nearly fought with the Prince. Furthermore, my father had not only lent but had also gone surety for considerable sums of money for the Prince's use, and it was supposed that without such help from his supporters he would have been too hard up to have been able to defend himself in the wars against him, and that he would have been more easily brought to ruin.

M. de la Borde, my father, finding himself persecuted for a religion which he had never professed, recognized the goodness of God which thus manifested itself, and took steps to receive instruction. He conferred with two ministers, M. Gaudet and M. de Miremont in the Marquise de Rothelin's house at Blandy, a league away from his own house. After receiving instruction he made public profession of the true religion, and God gave him grace to remain steadfast in it to the last breath of his life. On the first journey he took to Paris after peace was made he sought out the same company before whom he had abjured the faith, none of them yet knowing that he had since professed the reformed religion. He asked them to give him the book in which they had forced him to sign his abjuration: having it in his hand he told them publicly and freely how deeply he regretted that he had been a traitor to God, in that he had cared so little for his salvation as to deny even that small part of the truth which he had known. Thus saying he erased his signature, adding that at any rate those who might hereafter know of his fault would also know of his repentance. During the years 1569 and 1570 he was almost always ill and never left his house. His property was seized, his furniture was inventoried and a garrison was quartered on him. Throughout the whole time he received the consolations of M. de Miremont, minister of the Church, who often came to see him. M. de Morvillier, at that time senior *conseiller d'état*, knowing how ill he was and that he needed change of air, sent to

offer him his abbey of St Père at Melun, whither my father had himself carried in a litter, leaving my three brothers at home, all three dangerously ill. On his arrival at Melun he fainted, caused, as the doctors thought, by a fall coming along the road. The next day just as he was dispatching one of his servants to get news of my brothers he was seized with a second fainting fit and had time to say no more than these words, "Lord, it is eight-and-fifty years since Thou gavest me a soul. Thou gavest it white and unsoiled : I give it back besmirched and foul. Wash it in the blood of Jesus Christ Thy Son." Saying which he gave back his soul to God at Melun, of which place he was lord and viscount. His body was taken to Châtillon, in the parish of la Borde, which now belongs to my eldest brother, M. Guy Arbaleste, lord of la Borde and Châtillon.

Soon after the death of the late M. de la Borde, my mother, my brothers, my sister de Vaucelas and I myself went to Paris, where the division of his property between us was made. At that time I was a widow, having been married at the age of eighteen to M. Jean de Pas, lord of Feuquères. We were married in the year 1567, just at the moment when King Charles IX retired from Meaux to Paris, and the troubles of St Denis began. I will give you a very brief account of my first husband. He was brought up as a page to the Duke of Orleans,¹ and after his death, the late King François I, the Duke's father, took him as gentleman-in-waiting in his own house. Later on he was attached to King François II,² then dauphin of France, who was only a child. The Dauphin took a fancy to him and generally made him sleep in the wardrobe-room along with the Keeper of the wardrobe, for he rarely liked him out of his sight. And not being old enough to say his name Feuquères he called him Frigallet. Whilst in extreme youth he had a company of the King's guard and was

¹ Charles, 3rd son of François I, d. 1545.

² Grandson of François I, d. 1560.



MURDER OF THE ADMIRAL COLIGNY, AUGUST 24th, 1572

made Governor of Roye, a place on the frontier of Picardy. Madame du Peron, seeing how much he was loved by his masters and how popular he was at court, begged him to make her son cornet in his company. Her son afterwards became Duke of Retz¹ and Marshal of France. For some time Monsieur de Feuquères was fighting in Picardy with the Admiral, and, notwithstanding his youth, was one of the *Maréchaux de camp*. Whilst in these parts he often heard a Cordelier, dressed in his monk's frock, preaching the truth, and he listened with pleasure and began to have some knowledge of the errors of the Roman Church. Later on he went to Italy with M. de Guise,² and whilst there the French gentlemen who accompanied the said Duke did homage to the Pope and kissed his toe. But M. de Feuquères remarked that for a little money given to the Pope a man was free to eat meat in Lent and on other forbidden days, whereas also by the Pope's authority, another might be burnt for eating an egg. This troubled his conscience with a longing to learn how he might seek the truth. And yet on the other hand he felt himself on the road to advancement in the court and on the point of acquiring honours and wealth which he could never hope to possess if he were to make profession of the truth; on the contrary he might expect banishment from France where the fires of persecution were alight. I have often heard him say that the difficulties in making his choice between the two paths made him ill. At length, after reading the second Psalm, he determined to forget all worldly considerations, learning by it that kings and princes more often than not leagued themselves against God and against Christ his beloved King. From that moment he resolved to quit the mass and its errors and to profess the truth. At the same time he did not abandon the Court, even listening in company with a few other zealots to sermons in the Queen mother's

¹ Gondi, Albert de. His mother had charge of the children of Henri II.

² François, Duc de Guise. He was in Italy from Dec. 1556 to autumn 1557.

room whilst she was at dinner in the company of some of her ladies-in-waiting, who were protestants.

About this time M. de Feuquères took part in the attempt on Amboise ¹ although so cleverly and so secretly that he was merely suspected and could never be arrested. An official, who was made prisoner on this charge, had his life given him by M. de Guise on condition that, dressed like a priest and moving about the vestibule, chamber and anti-chamber of the King and Queen mother he should discover who was concerned in the affair. And he did in truth accuse several gentlemen who were arrested and in great trouble but he could never get hold of M. de Feuquères although he knew about him. God always stood in his way as M. de Feuquères has often related. He was also at Orleans when the Prince of Condé was arrested. He could see that the King, his master, looked askance at him and his guardian angel warned him to depart. He thereupon went to Châtillon to join the Admiral who was on the point of setting out for Orleans to clear himself. M. de Feuquères offered to accompany him but the Admiral advised against it and so instead he went to Paris. There news came of the death of his master, King François II, which set him, and many others, free from anxiety.

On the outbreak of the first troubles the late King Charles sent him to the Dukes of Lorraine and Savoy, both of whom offered him service and a place at Court. The Duke of Savoy even made him a specially good offer, to wit that he should be made a general both for offensive and defensive war and should direct the fortification of various places as need arose. On his return to court, where he saw the King and the Queen Mother, he found that the Prince of Condé had withdrawn from the court and had seized Orleans. After he had given a report on his mission he was commanded by the Queen Mother to follow the Prince and assure him of her goodwill in all

¹ La tumulte d'Amboise, March 1560, a huguenot plot under Renaudie in which Louis, Prince de Condé, was implicated.

matters concerning both his person and his estate, and to implore him to be a protector of mother and child against the family of Guise. In accordance with these orders he joined the Prince, who did him the honour to appoint him his senior *maréchal de camp* in his army, in which position he acquitted himself in a way which won him much praise. During the siege of Orleans he stayed in the town, busy with the fortifications and other matters and those who were there with him acknowledge that most of what was well done in the town could be attributed to his ability and zeal. During these troubles and also when they were over he was high in the favour of the Prince of Porcien.¹ He accepted a lieutenancy in his company of men-at-arms, realizing on the one hand that he could not expect to be welcomed at court at once, whilst on the other the Prince of Porcien was full of zeal and love for the Faith and, moreover, promised to do great things for it. And in truth, peace being made and all the Huguenots being in disgrace at Court, the Prince retired into Champagne, where he engaged M. de Feuquères to fortify Linchamps in Ardennes, which belonged to the Lady Catherine of Cleves, his wife. She married M. de Guise after the Prince's death. Shortly before the troubles of St Denis began the late M. de Feuquères came to Paris. He had a mind to get married and approached my father on the subject, setting before him certain gifts of land and legacies left him by the Prince of Porcien who had died three months before. Our marriage was arranged and notice given on a Thursday for the wedding to take place on the Sunday following, which was St Michael's day.

However M. de Feuquères received a summons from the Prince of Condé to take part in the enterprise of Meaux. So he left on the Friday morning with his retinue, and by good luck got out of Paris. M. de la Borde, my father, wishing to leave that same afternoon, ran into great danger, and if the *Maréchal de Vielle-*

¹ Antoine de Croi.

ville had not arrived in Paris at that moment my father and all of us would have been detained. We got out and went to Brie Comte Robert. The Prince of Condé's enterprise coming to naught, the late M. de Feuquères followed us and we were married on St Michael's day just as the King rode into Paris, which was, as I have said, the first event in the second troubles. We went to la Borde, to my father's house, whence M. de Feuquères departed on the following Tuesday to join the Prince and the Admiral. His rank as *maréchal de camp* was confirmed and a company of men-at-arms given him. He filled this post right through the troubles with much honour and the praise of all. It was he, who at the battle of St Denis, after the charges were over, reconnoitred the enemy, and in consequence, on his assurances to the Prince and the Admiral that the enemy had retreated into Paris with all his cannon, our quarters at St Denis and our army's quarters were both maintained. Throughout the march into Lorraine, as I have often heard him say, our army was so well quartered that the enemy could never rush any of our camps nor get to blows with any of our troops. But we must acknowledge that God manifestly blessed his zeal in his charge. For instance, I have heard him tell how at Notre-Dame de l'Epine he thought there were no mortal means by which a battle could be avoided in a position which would have been very disadvantageous for the Prince and his army, and how, as the Prince camped, a severe frost set in all the night which enabled the troops to march at break of day, and to traverse, with ease, a league or so of very bad road which had stopped them just at that point. They were no sooner over it than the enemy reached its other end, but God willed that a thaw should come at the selfsame moment which held the enemy in camp the whole day, unable to pass. Thus the prince evaded the battle and could effect a junction with his foreign troops, and so strengthened, march to Chartres where peace was made.

During this march I was at Orleans whither my father had gone to escape the troubles, while Mlle. de la Borde, my mother, who did not profess the reformed religion, was free to stay either in Paris or in some of our other houses doing the best she could to protect our property. From Orleans we went to la Borde where we passed the whole of the spring. When summer came we bid my father farewell and I never saw him again. My husband and I went to the Ardennes where we met with many difficulties from the various governors of the district, who knew M. de Feuquères to be devoted to the Religion and to be an able soldier. Every day some attempt to assassinate him was made. In the month of August 1568, the Prince of Condé, who was at Noyers, sent for him but M. de Feuquères had scarcely had time to gather his friends and to mount a-horseback before he learnt that the Prince had retreated to la Rochelle, finding it impossible, with due regard to his own safety, to await the day fixed for the rendezvous. M. de Feuquères waited a few weeks and then made an agreement with M. de Genlis and several other gentlemen, who found themselves in the same predicament, to send a messenger to the Prince of Orange asking whether he would like them all to join with him. He was overjoyed with the proposal for the help came at a very opportune moment. When the Prince of Orange asked Monsr. de Malberg about these French lords who were about to join him M. de Malberg spoke very affectionately of M. de Feuquères and praised him highly, which was the reason why the Prince, on the arrival of the French troops, greeted him with special kindness and employed him on every possible occasion. The Prince of Orange with his army of Germans and French quitted the Low Countries and crossing Picardy and Champagne joined the Duke of Deux Ponts ¹ on the German frontier.

In this same month God gave us Suzanne de Pas, our eldest daughter, and the only child of the late M. de

¹ Wolfgang of Bavaria, Duke of Zweibrücke or Deux Ponts.

Feuquères. I was brought to bed with her at Sedan the 29th December 1568. Her godfather was M. Doncher and his wife was her godmother. M. de Feuquères was never able to see me on his marches to and fro, for he could not leave the army on account of his office of *maréchal de camp*, which he held under the Duke of Deux Ponts during his march on la Charité. M. de Feuquères knew the town, and the battery being made ready, those in command within surrendered in the month of May 1569. M. de Feuquères was wounded in the leg before this place by the kick of a horse, and a fever supervening he gave up his soul to God to the sorrow of all honest men, leaving behind him a happy memory. This was on the 23rd of May in the aforesaid year. I was nineteen years old, in deep trouble, away from my native land and from all means of livelihood and harassed with an infinite amount of business. While at Sedan I learnt of my father's death, the late M. de la Borde, of a sister's death who was just about to be married and of my father-in-law's death as well. Such little property as I possessed had been seized on account of the troubles; and I never saw so much as a farthing of M. de Feuquères' fortune. But God raised me up friends, and helped me through all my troubles. Nevertheless, my health has never been good from that time forth, and most of the doctors who have attended me have attributed it to the burden of sorrow then laid upon me. Peace being made my mother sent for me to come to Paris, where, after having helped in the division of my late father's estate, I lingered on to try and get my daughter's inheritance from her father settled. And I was still there when the massacre of St Bartholomew took place.

For the sake of my health and to divert my mind from so many matters of business I had arranged to spend the winter with my sister de Vaucelas and, as I was to start on the Monday following St Bartholomew's Day, I intended to go to the Louvre on the Sunday to take

leave of the Princess de Conti,¹ Mme de Bouillon,² the Marchioness de Rothelin and Mme de Dampierre. But whilst I was yet abed one of my kitchen-maids, who was a protestant, and who lodged in the town, came running to me in terror saying that men were being killed on every side. I do not let myself be easily dismayed but having put on my petticoat and looked out of the window I saw down in the Rue St Antoine, where I lodged, people in a turmoil and several companies of the guard every one of them having a white cross fastened to his hat. I could see that the girl's news was real and I sent to my mother's house, where my brothers were, to know what was the matter. Every one there was in great alarm because at that time my brothers called themselves protestants. M. Pierre Chevalier, bishop of Senlis, my maternal uncle, sent me word to put my valuables together and he would send for me immediately, but just as he was sending someone to fetch me news came that the late M. Charles Chevalier seigneur d'Esprunes, who was much attached to the reformed religion, had been killed in the Rue de Bétisy where he lodged so as to be near the Admiral.

And this was one reason why M. de Senlis forgot all about me, as well as the fact that when he tried to go down the street he was arrested, and if he had not crossed himself when bidden he would have been in danger of his life. But this he did willingly for he had no knowledge of the truth. After waiting half an hour and seeing the tumult in my street increasing, I sent my daughter, who was three years and a half old, in the arms of a servant girl to the house of M. de Perreuze, at that time *maître des requêtes* in the King's household, and one of the kindest of my kinsmen and friends. M. de Perreuze took the child in by a back door and sent me word that I should be welcome if I liked to come too. I accepted his offer and went to his house, I being the

¹ Jeanne de Coesme, m. François, 3rd son of Louis, Prince de Condé.

² Wife of Henri Robert de la Marck, Duc de Bouillon.

seventh to take shelter there. Our host had not yet really understood what was happening, but after sending one of his men to the Louvre the man brought word of the Admiral's death and of ever so many more lords and gentlemen and that the whole town was in an uproar. By this time it was eight o'clock in the morning. I had scarcely left my lodgings before the Duke of Guise's servants arrived, bade my landlord give me up and searched high and low for me. Not being able to find me they sent to my mother with an offer to guarantee my life and property if I would bring them 100 crowns. My mother sent word of this offer to M. de Perreuze's house, but after thinking it over carefully I decided that it was better that they should neither know my whereabouts, nor that I should go to them, but rather to beg my mother to say that she did not know what had become of me, and at the same time to offer them the money they demanded. Getting no news of me they pillaged my lodgings.

The following people had taken refuge in M. de Perreuze's house, to wit, M. de Landres and his wife Mlle de Chauffreau, M. de Mattio and all their households, more than forty persons in all. In order to divert suspicion M. de Perreuze was obliged to send to a distant quarter of the town to get in supplies for so large a number. Either he or his wife stood at the door of his house to say a word of greeting to M. de Guise or to M. de Nevers¹ or other catholic lords as they passed to and fro, as well as to the city captains who were pillaging the houses of huguenots in the neighbourhood. We were all there till Tuesday but however good a face M. de Perreuze put on he could not escape suspicion, so that orders were given that his house was to be searched on Tuesday afternoon. Most of those who had taken refuge there had already gone elsewhere and only the late Mlle de Chauffreau and I were left. Our host was obliged to hide us, Mlle de Chauffreau and her waiting-woman in the woodhouse outside, and

¹ Louis de Gonzague, Duc de Nevers, 1539-1595.

me and one of my women in a hollow gable ; the rest of our servants disguised and hid themselves as they best could. Whilst I was in this hollow above the attic I heard the most terrible cries from men, women and children who were being murdered in the streets, and having left my child below I fell into the greatest perplexity and almost despair so that, had I not feared God's wrath, I would far sooner have flung myself down than have fallen alive into the hands of the mob, or have seen my daughter massacred before my eyes, which would have been more terrible to me than my own death. But one of my servant girls took the child safely through every peril and got with her to the house of Dame Marie Guillard, Dame d'Esprunes, my maternal grandmother, and there she left her, and my grandmother kept her till her own death. That same Tuesday afternoon in the very street where M. de Perreuze lived, *Vielle rue du Temple*, the President de la Place¹ (of happy memory) was killed under pretence of taking him to the King to save his life. M. de Perreuze, seeing an attack made so close to his house, and he himself threatened, employed M. de Thou² (the King's Advocate and at the present time President in the court of Parliament) to safeguard us and to preserve his house from pillage. This outbreak of violence passing by him more easily than he had thought likely it next became a question how to disguise us and get us away to other quarters. I could not go to my mother's house because a guard had been set in it, so I went to the house of a smith who had married one of my mother's women, a turbulent fellow who was captain of his quarter. I counted on his doing me no hurt on account of the kindnesses that my mother had done him. My mother came there in the evening to see me, more dead than alive and much more shivery than I was. I spent the night at this blacksmith's hearing

¹ Pierre de la Place, President à la Cour des Aides, historian and calvinist theologian, 1520-1572.

² Christophe de Thou, premier President, 1508-1582.

the huguenots abused and seeing the booty brought in from the pillaged houses. The blacksmith told me roundly that I must go to mass. On the Wednesday morning my mother sent to the president Tambonneau, and also to her godmother, Mlle Morin, wife of the *Lieutenant Criminel* and mother of the Chancellor L'Hospital's¹ wife, who was still living at that time, imploring their help in saving me. About noon I went to see them all alone, and not knowing the way I followed a little boy who walked ahead of me. They were lodged in the Cloisters of Notre-Dame and the only people present were Mlle Morin, the Chancellor's mother-in-law, M. and Mme Tambonneau, and their brother, M. de Paraz; and besides these only one of their serving-men, Jacques Minier, knew of my presence. I got into the house secretly and I was lodged in the president Tambonneau's study all that Wednesday and the Thursday up to nightfall. But on Thursday evening word was sent that the house was to be searched for M. de Chaumont Barbezieux, who was their kinsman, and for Mme de Belesbat, their sister, and fearing that during the search I might be discovered they were of opinion that I ought to move elsewhere. I was taken at midnight to a corn-chandler's house, a man who had been their servant and who was a worthy fellow. I was with him for five days, helped by M. and Mme de Tambonneau and all their family. Indeed I received such generous friendship and assistance in my need that, apart from the relationship between Mme de Tambonneau and myself, there will never be a day of my life when I do not feel deeply indebted to them all.

On the following Wednesday, Mlle de la Borde, my mother, having had time to get her breath and find means to save my brothers from shipwreck by inducing them to go to mass, concluded that she could save me in the same manner. She therefore sent our cousin M. de

¹ Michel de l'Hospital, 1507-1573, huguenot Chancellor of Catherine de Medici.

Paroz to talk with me but after several discussions together he found me, by God's grace, very far from consenting. On the Wednesday morning, that is eleven days after St Bartholomew's day, after my mother had done everything she possibly could to win my consent, and instead of the answer she wanted receiving nothing but entreaties that she would help me to escape from Paris, she finally threatened to send my little daughter back to me. I could make no other answer but that I would take the child in my arms and we would be both massacred together, but at the same time I determined to leave Paris whatever might happen to me. I begged the man who had brought my mother's messages to take a place for me in a stage waggon or in some boat plying up the Seine. During the time that I stayed with the corn-chandler I suffered not a little. I was lodged in a room above one in which lived Mme de Foissy, which made it impossible to move about for fear of being heard ; neither could they let me have a light as much on her account as on the neighbours'. When anything was brought me to eat it was hidden in an apron under the pretence of fetching linen for this Mme de Foissy.

At length I left these lodgings on Wednesday, the eleventh day after the massacre, at eleven in the morning and took my place in a boat going to Sens. My friends would not take a seat for me in the stage waggon, partly because they are so very public and partly they feared I might be recognized. On getting into the boat, which was bound for Sens, I found myself in company with two monks and a priest and two shopkeepers and their wives. As we passed les Tournelles the boat was stopped and passports demanded. Every one produced theirs but me, and I had none. Thereupon they all began to say I must be a huguenot and that I ought to be drowned. They made me get out of the boat. I besought them to take me to the house of M. de Voysenon, auditor of accounts, who was a friend of mine and my grandmother Mlle d'Esprune's man of business. He was a staunch

catholic and I assured them that he would answer for me. Two soldiers marched me up to the house. It was God's will that they remained standing at the door and let me go up alone. I found poor M. de Voysenon terribly upset and though I was in disguise he would call me Mademoiselle and tell me all about several people who had taken refuge with him. I told him I had no time to listen to him because I thought every minute the soldiers would follow me, and I added it seemed that God had chosen him to be the means of saving my life and if he failed I was as good as dead. So he went down to the soldiers and told them he had met me at the house of Mlle d'Esprunes whose son was the Bishop of Senlis, and they were very good catholics and well known as such. The soldiers answered very curtly that they were not inquiring about those folk but about me. He replied that he had known me to be a catholic at one time, but what I was now he couldn't say. At that moment an honest woman came by and asked what they wanted to do with me. "By God, drown her for a huguenot. Can't you see what a fright she's in." And in truth I thought every moment they would throw me in the river. "You know me," said the woman. "I'm no huguenot. I go to mass every day but I've been in such a fright for this week past that I'm all in a fever." "By God," said one of the soldiers, "so are we all. It's given me the scab." So they put me back into the boat, telling me that if I had been a man I should not have got off so cheap. That very same time as I was arrested in the boat my lodging at the corn-chandler's was ransacked and if I had been discovered in it I should have been in great danger. We went on our way and night found us at a place which is called little la Borde. The whole afternoon the monks and the shopkeepers talked of nothing but of their joy in what they had seen in Paris, and if I said a word they told me I talked like a huguenot. So the only thing I could do was to feign sleep so that there was no occasion for me to speak.

As we came off the boat I caught sight of Minier, the man I mentioned before, who had been sent by Mme Tambonneau to learn what had become of me for, having heard of my arrest, she was in great trouble on my account. It was this man who had acted as go-between for my mother and me and carried all her messages. He signed to me not to take notice of him but as it was he who had taken my passage on the boat the women with me recognized him. I managed to tell him this without being seen by them so he came into the room where we all were and told me his mistress had sent him to look after the vintage. At supper he sat at table with us and calling me Charlotte, bade me fetch him wine. This dispelled all their doubts of me. There was but one sleeping-room in this inn where we were, with three beds in it; the monks and priest slept in one, the two shopkeepers in another, and their wives and I in the third. I was very uneasy for I was wearing a shift made of Holland, trimmed with point-lace which Mme de Tambonneau had lent me and I thought that the women would see I wasn't the servant girl I pretended to be if I slept with them. On Thursday morning, as we were going aboard, Minier declined to come too because he said boats always made him feel ill. He whispered to me not to get off at either Corbeil nor Melun, of which latter place we were Seigneurs, for fear I should be recognized and so run into danger, but to remember to get off at the village of Ivry about a league from Corbeil. When I saw Ivry I asked the boatman to let me get on shore but he refused. But it was God's will that just opposite the village the boat should ground which obliged him to disembark us all. After paying the boatman, Minier and I walked to Ivry and being there he decided to take me to Bouschet, another league further on and close to the house of the Chancellor L'Hospital. Bouschet belonged to the President Tambonneau and Minier meant me to shelter with his vine-dresser. We covered five leagues afoot. He left me

with this poor labourer and went on to Vallegrand, the Chancellor's house, to see if I could take refuge there with Mme de l'Hospital. However he found them all in an upset for the King had quartered a large garrison on them on pretence of protecting the Chancellor, and his wife had been forced to go to mass. M. de l'Hospital sent word by Minier that I was very welcome to come to his house on the understanding that I would go to mass. He did not, however, expect me to agree to this condition after all the dangers I had experienced in escaping from Paris to avoid this very thing. I stayed on with the vine-dresser for fifteen days while Minier went back to Paris. By ill-luck Queen Elizabeth's¹ Swiss came to turn the village upside-down in a search for some miserable huguenot, just at the very time that I reached Bouschet, but by God's grace they left the house where I was alone because it had a warrant against search. These Swiss served me for an excuse to stay indoors and not to be bothered to go to mass, even when there was a procession of the entire parish. The poor vine-dresser greatly regretted the neighbouring families of the gentry who had all been massacred, acknowledging that the country had no one left so charitable to the poor and so worthy as they. He always let me say grace in French before and after meat and took me for a servant-girl belonging to Mme Tambonneau, as Minier had said. At the end of a fortnight I had a mind to go to Brye to get advice as to what I had better do. I borrowed an ass from the vine-dresser and besought him to escort me. To this he consented and we crossed the river Seine between Corbeil and Melun, at a place called St Port, and from thence I went on to Esprunes, a house which belonged to my late grandmother. As soon as I got there the servant-girls in the place flung their arms round my neck, saying: "Oh, Mademoiselle, we thought you were dead." The poor vine-dresser stood still in astonishment, asking if I were in truth a lady, and on leaving

¹ Isabelle or Elizabeth d'Autrione, wife of Charles IX.

offered me his house, promising to keep me well hidden and to see I was not forced to go to mass, and begging me to excuse him because he had not given me the big bed to sleep in. Making an end of what he had to say he went back home while I stayed for the next fortnight at Esprunes. I must not forget to add that the chaplain of Esprunes, who lived at Melun, came to see me, and among other consoling remarks he told me that "Since God's judgments were manifest among His children it behoved the wicked and the evil-doer to be smitten with fear."

At the end of a fortnight I again mounted an ass and after a ride of four leagues reached the house of my eldest brother, M. de la Borde. I found him in great vexation of spirit, partly because to save his life he was forced to go to mass, and partly because he was pursued by demands to swear to all sorts of abjurations. Our friends in Paris, when they heard that I was with him, were alarmed lest I should persuade him from taking these oaths, and told him plainly that I should be his ruin if he let me stay at la Borde without going to mass. In consequence on the following Sunday he took me into the chapel, knowing that the priest was there; but I, catching sight of the man, turned my back on my brother and went away weeping bitterly. My brother was sorry then that he had ever said a word to me on the subject. I decided to stay no longer at la Borde, but as, when I left Paris, I had only fifteen silver testons in my purse and no clothes but those I wore as a disguise, I spent a whole week trying to find a carter who would take me to Sedan. Out of 1500¹ crowns which were owing to me in that neighbourhood I got forty paid. Whilst I was waiting one of my waiting-women and one of my men-servants joined me. I told my brother of my plan, which he thought very dangerous. All the same he persuaded my carter, who was making difficulties, to take me, only imploring me not to tell my mother and our

¹ Part of her inheritance from her father.

other friends that he knew about my going because he was afraid they would all be so angry with him. His farewell to me was his assurance that as I was so full of love and zeal for God He would surely bless my journey and my person ; as indeed it came to pass by His mercy. I reached Sedan on All Souls' Day, Nov. 1st, without let or hindrance on my way. On reaching Sedan I found many friends who offered me help of all sorts. I was not an hour in the town before I was once more dressed like a lady, each one lending me something, and I was welcomed with every kindness and distinction by the Duke and Duchess of Bouillon. I stayed at Sedan until my marriage with M. du Plessis as I will relate in due time.

CHAPTER IV

REFUGEES AT SEDAN

I MUST now return to M. du Plessis who had escaped into England after the massacre. He was well received in that country and welcomed by everybody of quality and sound doctrine, and whilst there he made many friendships which have stood him in good stead in subsequent negotiations. He found his first consolation in the affection of two old friends who remembered him in his misfortunes. The first was that M. Hubert Languet, a Burgundian, of whom mention has already been made. This gentleman chanced to be in Paris at the time of the massacre employed by Duke Auguste, Elector of Saxony, and other protestant princes of the empire in a negotiation with King Charles. M. Languet, counting on his immunity as an ambassador in the midst of the fury of the massacre, set out, in danger of his life, to save M. du Plessis and to furnish him with means to escape to Germany. Whilst on his way he was seized by the mob and taken to the Madeleine, whence he was released by M. de Morvillier,¹ chief Councillor of State, though not before he stood in fear of his life. As he heard that M. du Plessis had already left Paris and as it was impossible to know which road he would take, and, furthermore, as whichever way he went he was sure to be in need of friends, M. Languet wrote to various friends of his own both in the chief towns of Germany, England and elsewhere, authorizing them to supply M. du Plessis with as much money as he wanted on his, M. Languet's security. By the grace of God M. du Plessis had no need to avail

¹ Jean de Morvillier, 1506-1577. Garde des Sceaux, 1568-1570.

himself of this assistance. The other friend in his need was Sir Francis Walsingham, at that time the Queen of England's ambassador to the French Court, and since her Secretary of State. He, of his own accord sent a special courier with letters to his mistress the Queen and to all the most notable lords of the Council in England, recommending M. du Plessis to them as a person in whom they might place complete confidence in whatsoever business they pleased. Nor was this a small recommendation when one considers what a reputation for perfidy the French had earned by the massacre, and also when one remembers that M. du Plessis was but 23 years old. For a while he spent the weary days common to all refugees with his books. He wrote several papers both in Latin and in French addressed to the Queen, imploring her to uphold the Church, which papers are still in the possession of divers people, together with certain explanations of the calumnies on the French protestants which were spread abroad. He was even employed on various negotiations with the Queen, both by the Prince of Orange and the Estates General of Holland and Zealand (who had, so far, never seen him), as well as on behalf of the Duke of Alençon.¹ The Duke had various projects on hand against King Charles, and proposed, if they succeeded, to cross over into England and raise all the French protestants in that country.

The condition of France was so horrible that M. du Plessis could not think of returning there until things had changed although his family were for ever begging him to come back. Instead he turned over in his mind various plans, such as going to Sweden, where his relative Charles de Mornay de Varennes was Grand Master; or to Ireland to fight the savages there, or even to Peru or to Canada. This last enterprise was suggested by his particular friend the late Charles de Boisot, who was afterwards Governor of Zealand, who was then almost as

¹ François, 5th son Henri II, 1554-1584, Duc d'Alençon 1566, Duc d'Anjou 1576.

much in despair over the Low Countries as M. du Plessis was over France. It was God's will however to save his church and to deliver la Rochelle by appointing the Duke of Anjou¹ (our present King) to the crown of Poland. M. du Plessis was asked very pressingly to go with the Duke who was in need of people who knew something of foreign tongues and places. I have heard M. du Plessis say more than once that, falling into a deep meditation, he received an intuition of the near and sure deliverance of la Rochelle although he could not imagine whence succour would come. And indeed how should he think of a matter about which the Poles themselves had not yet thought? The Duke holding to his purpose of accepting the crown of Poland certain huguenot lords began to take courage, and M. du Plessis resolved to cross over to France at the special request of M. de la Noue.²

An appeal to arms was made very soon after, which he strongly opposed, arguing more than once with M. de la Noue that the affairs of the Religion should not be mixed up with those of the Duke of Alençon; it was better to let him stand quite apart and have no more than a friendly understanding with him. The contrary advice was followed and the result did not make him change his opinion. It was confirmed by the undue haste with which the enterprise of St Germain was planned, to which place M. du Plessis had gone to help M. de Thoré³ and M. de Turenne⁴ to escape. They were needed for the execution of several important undertakings in Normandy which were planned for the 10th March 1574, and which were to take place at the same time as similar undertakings in other parts of France.

Just as matters were arranged with these two lords a

¹ Henri, 4th son Henri II, 1551-1589; elected King of Poland 1573; succeeded his brother Charles IX 1574; assassinated 1589.

² François de la Noue, 1531-1591, celebrated huguenot captain and writer.

³ Guillaume de Montmorenci, 5th son of Anne, Constable of France.

⁴ Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne, m. Charlotte de la Marck, Duchesse de Bouillon 1591, and was created Duc de Bouillon.

man arrived from M. de Guित्रy announcing to the Duke of Alençon that he had taken up arms because those in Poitou had already done so, and advising the Duke to retire to Mantes and there to do the same. This news was considered an outrage for M. de Guित्रy could very well have waited for the Duke's answer before taking up arms. All the same a resolution was taken, as well as it could be in such haste, that the Duke, the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé and other lords should go to Mantes. They were to get away from the Court early in the morning, hunting horns round their necks and guided by M. du Plessis. They reckoned on finding the town gate open, for Mantes was part of the Duke's apanage; moreover, the garrison was the company of the late Duke of Montmorenci commanded by M. de Buhy who was M. du Plessis' brother. But just as M. du Plessis thought he could get a couple of hours sleep whilst preparations to start were being made, the plans were all changed to his very great regret. He protested, when the announcement of the change was made to him, that arrest and imprisonment was a certain thing for them all, as indeed it came to pass. They sent him to his brother, M. de Buhy, to bid him keep the gate of Mantes open for M. de Guित्रy, and they also sent to M. de Guित्रy to tell him to march to Mantes with his troops which they hoped would consist of three hundred gentlemen and a certain number of foot-soldiers, and said that once the town was taken they would go thither themselves. They never stopped to consider that they could not move about with troops without giving alarm to the Court, which would immediately retire on Paris and arrest them all as suspects.

M. de Buhy accordingly kept the gate towards Rosny open and M. du Plessis found himself at the Bridge Gate between five and six in the morning. M. de Guित्रy could not reach Mantes before eight o'clock and had then only forty horse with him for many had left him at the rendezvous. When they saw that the Duke was not there they merely rode round the town and then departed for Normandy.

M. de Buhy managed so adroitly that at the time nothing in his behaviour was noticed and later in the day he quietly left the town under pretence of taking news to the court of what had passed. Nobody suspected him in the least for he let them know that M. de Guित्रy had a long-standing quarrel with him, which was quite true in the past. M. du Plessis went to Chantilly, M. de Montmorenci's house, where the brothers met each other. M. de Buhy was very unwilling to quit his home, pinning his faith on letters which the King and the Queen Mother had written to him praising him for his dutiful preservation of Mantes. M. du Plessis persisted that this pretence could not be kept up for more than four days, and that the truth would most certainly be discovered and then he would find himself in trouble. So they set out for Sedan, passing by way of M. de Conflans, a connection of theirs and father of Vicomte d'Auchy. He very readily opened his coffer for them, from which they took 200 crowns, for it was not possible for them to go to their own home for money. When they reached Sedan so as not to offend the Duke of Bouillon who wished to remain neutral, they went, under a feigned name to Jametz, a stronghold belonging to the Duke, where they stayed till the death of King Charles in May 1574. While awaiting this event the Duke of Alençon was plotting to get away from Court, and naturally was desirous of finding a reasonable number of troops ready to support him after his escape. He therefore wrote to M. du Plessis begging him to go without delay to Count Louis of Nassau,¹ who was camped before Maestricht, and induce him to lead his troops into France. The mission was full of perils but all the same M. du Plessis agreed to go. He shaved off his beard very closely so that he could play the part of a page on his way to Germany in charge of his servant, in order to learn the language at the court of the Count of Neuenaar, brother-in-law to the Prince of Orange. A guide who was a

¹ Brother of William, Prince of Orange, killed in battle 1574.

stranger to him was engaged to conduct them. They crossed the Ardennes and arrived at Liège where a number of questions were put to him. Thence with a passport from the Bishop he crossed over to Aix by a road generally infested with Spanish troops; at Aix they took breath and bought scarves¹ of Count Louis' colour so that they could join his army which was camped two leagues from Maestricht at a town called Gulpen. On the road they met with some mercenaries whom he interrogated in German. His guide, who knew but very little German, was taken aback at hearing M. du Plessis talking to them, because he imagined him to be a page on his way to learn the language and was not aware that he yet knew a single word. So he began to shout that he was betrayed but after a little talk with him M. du Plessis reassured him and he stayed on in his service.

And so M. du Plessis at length reached Count Louis where he had much private talk with him but was not able to move him from his projects. The only thing M. du Plessis did do while with the Count was to form an opinion that nothing but ruin awaited an army such as the Count commanded, made up as it was of men borrowed from various counts and princes, his relations and kinsmen. So, being unable to do any good, he returned to Aix and thence set out for Liège. But a league or so out of Aix, as he was leaving a village called Heury Chapelle, he fell into an ambush of *barquebusiers* coming from Limbourg. He had barely time to ride back through the village and out by the way he had come in before the gate was shut behind him. At the foot of a hill he saw six horsemen following and so he set his horse at a gallop. By ill-luck his pistols came loose and fell owing to a rotten strap and, dismounting to pick them up, he allowed those who followed to gain on him. A little further on his servant's horse fell and they could scarce get it up again, and he then made him go in front.

¹ Soldiers did not wear uniforms, but often wore scarves of various colours to indicate their leaders.

By this time he was very nearly overtaken. It should be noted that he rode a horse that generally wore trap-pings to its saddle which he had had cut off that very day so that he should be able to jump ditches. As he wanted to spur on this horse the animal shied to one side to get out of the mud, for it was at the beginning of March and after heavy rains, and it bolted with him across a meadow alongside of the road, and M. du Plessis could not hold it in however much he tugged at the reins. At the end of the meadow there was a steep drop down which the horse plunged, snapping bridle, saddle and all, and carried him among the willows by the stream's side. At last he managed to seize hold of a branch and to let the horse pass under him, but the branch breaking he fell on his back, which was bad for a long time, although in the heat of the moment he scarcely noticed it. The horse feeling itself free of its rider stopped short, and thus M. du Plessis was able to catch it again. He made certain of death for he could see no way of escape because of the width of the stream, and it seemed impossible that his pursuers, who were so close on his heels, should not find and seize him. In his sore need he first prayed to God, and then began to rebuckle the harness and finally led his horse along to a place where he could more easily regain the road. He saw his hat lying in the meadow and, no one being in sight, he dismounted to pick it up. As he was remounting his guide crept out of a bush and came up to hold his stirrup. M. du Plessis asked what had become of his pursuers and the man told him that they turned back directly they saw him leave the highway, that is to say when the horse bolted with him. They captured a foot-soldier called la Roche, otherwise Emery, since usher to the King of Navarre's council at Paris, who had joined him when he left Count Louis, and they told this man that they could see M. du Plessis was trying to draw them into an ambush but that they knew how to look after themselves. Thus God, as so often, makes use of an accident that seems to lead straight to death for

our preservation and salvation. So he went on his way once more to Aix where he engaged a guide to conduct him across Luxembourg. The man lost his way the very first morning in the great swamps of Limbourg and they could hear by the sound of the Spanish drums that there were troops on every side. With great difficulty they got out of the marshes and came out close by a monastery of the order of Prémontré called Renneberg where he knew five monks were living and, as his horses were worn out, he determined to stop there. At first the monks made a difficulty about letting him in, but he said he was a scholar journeying from Cologne, and as he spoke to them in latin and sounded very plausible, they opened the door, gave him dinner and fed his horses. He talked with them so freely and in such a friendly way that they offered to lend him their own horses and were full of obliging offers. All he asked for was a letter to frank him across the neighbouring frontier; they gave him one to the mayor of Muderscheid, who in turn gave him one to the mayor of St Vit, and so on from mayor to mayor and from place to place, and thus he crossed the whole of Luxembourg without hindrance, and came safely to Givonne, close to Sedan. And so at last he found himself back in Jametz. It was in March 1574 that he made this journey.

As soon as he got back to Jametz he heard of the escape of the Prince of Condé from the Court and of his flight towards Germany. M. du Plessis went to meet him on his way, between Sedan and Mouzon, and rode two leagues with him as far as Juvigny. There at the prayer of his followers the Prince separated from them for his greater safety, and was taken secretly and by by-roads to Jametz, where he stayed in hiding for a week till the alarm was over. His troops in the meantime continued on their way to Germany, through the Metz country, just as if he were still with them. A few days later M. de Méru,¹ of the Montmorenci family passed by the same

¹ Charles de Montmorenci, 3rd son of Anne, Constable of France.

way and M. de Buhy and M. du Plessis kept him in their lodgings for a fortnight or thereabout, till the hunt had gone by. Then disguising him as a falconer they got him safely into Germany in charge of a messenger¹ from Merville in Luxembourg, who was not acquainted with him.

M. du Plessis and his brother stayed on at Jametz till the death of King Charles in the following May. M. du Plessis passed his time in writing on various subjects, and among other things a book entitled "On the lawful power of a Prince over his people."² This has since been printed and published, but without its being widely known who was the author. M. de Buhy, his brother, and he saw a good deal of the late Madame de Morvillier and also of Mlle de Franqueville, her daughter, who is now Madame de Vallières, both of whom had taken refuge in Jametz during the troubles. They were intimate too with the late M. de Chelandre, captain of the place, a very old man, whose son has since succeeded him. Immediately after the death of King Charles they went back to Sedan so as to be more on the spot should anything result from it.

They lodged with M. de la Mothe, the captain of Sedan, a very worthy gentleman and devoted to the religion; his lodging was in a tower over the town gate. Now, owing to the troubles in France since the massacre of St Bartholomew many noble families and many honourable gentlemen of all sorts of professions had taken refuge in Sedan so that they found a number of the French nobility in their quarter of the town. Among others was M. de Bourry, since deceased, their first cousin. M. du Plessis also often saw M. d'Hendreville with whom he had been very friendly in England, and whom he loved and respected highly. This M. d'Hendreville was a *premier conseiller* in the court of the Parliament

¹ An official employed to carry money, letters, and sometimes to act as an escort, especially to young students.

² It is probable that this is the well-known "*Vindiciae contra Tyrannos*," see Pro. Harold J. Laski: "A defence of liberty against tyrants," 1924.

of Rouen, a man greatly esteemed and honoured as long as he lived, and held to be a man of honour, a just judge, free from passion, charitable, a true friend, and he is still regretted by all who knew him regardless of which religion they might be. M. du Plessis also received daily visits from several ministers and men of letters, and nothing of importance happened, whether concerning the troubles in France and the cause of the religion, or concerning the special affairs of the late Duke of Bouillon,¹ that was not communicated to him. During the time he spent at Sedan he wrote both about matters in France and the troubles there as occasion arose and also about similar troubles in the Low Countries; among others was a paper on the death of Don Louis de Requesens, Grand Commander of Castille, who had succeeded the Duke of Alva in the Low Countries, which paper was sent to the Prince of Orange and was printed in Flemish and in French not without bearing fruit. The subject-matter was to incite the Estates of the Low Countries to rise against tyranny at this moment and to join cause with the men of Holland and Zealand, since their interests were one and the same, as indeed very shortly after came to pass as can be read in history.

At this time I was living at Sedan and occasionally saw something of M. de Buhy and M. du Plessis as well as of their younger brother, M. de Baunes. I was living quite near to them at the house of M. de Verdavagne, the late Duke of Bouillon's doctor. In the following month of August M. de Buhy made a secret journey to his own house and was away about two months and during his absence M. du Plessis and M. de Baunes continued to come and see me every day and the polished and honest conversation of M. du Plessis never failed to give me pleasure. All the same, having lived alone for the five years of my widowhood, and wishing to go on in the same way of life, I deliberately sounded his intentions by remarking how strange I thought it for those who were

¹ Henri Robert de la Marck.

soldiers to think of marrying in such calamitous times. But finding his thoughts far away from marriage and knowing how high his reputation was, I concluded that the frequency of his visits was due to our close neighbourhood. Since I had come to Sedan I had taken great pleasure in happily filling my solitude in the study of arithmetic, painting and other subjects which we now sometimes worked at together, so that I was very glad he should continue to visit me. And indeed I became as fond of him as I was of my own brothers although I was not in the least thinking of marriage. On M. de Buhy's return he told M. du Plessis that he had settled with his mother and his wife to pass the rest of the bad times on an estate that he had in Bourbonnais, called Morverin. M. du Plessis preferred to stay on at Sedan so as to be near to the Prince of Condé who had escaped into Germany whence a levy of mercenaries was expected. So the brothers separated, M. de Baunes, the youngest of them, choosing to stay with M. du Plessis.

During the whole of this winter the late Duke of Bouillon languished, growing daily weaker. It was common knowledge that his recovery was hopeless and that he had been poisoned at the siege of Rochelle. Mme de Bouillon, his mother, came to see him. Many people were afraid that she would seize the castle on her son's death, and more especially many mistrusted M. des Avelles who was Governor of the castle. The (reformed) Church had grown finely owing to the number of the refugees, but M. du Plessis, in company with many other worthy folk, foresaw that it would be scattered if the Governor could once have things his own way. He tried several different ways to prevent this but at last decided to lay the matter before M. de Verdavagne, my host and the Duke's doctor, who was a deeply religious and zealous man. They agreed that M. de Verdavagne should tell Mme de Bouillon, the Duke's wife, who was abed with child, the gravity of her husband's illness and what a danger there was, should it please God to call him,

that the Duchess, her mother-in-law, who hated the Religion, should seize the town and hold it for the King of France's pleasure by means of M. des Avelles. Having heard all that they had to say, deeply afflicted though she was, she decided to write to the Duke who was lying ill in another room. After having read her letter he desired to see her to discuss its contents with her. So she had herself carried into his room and after coming to a conclusion together she was carried back to bed. On the morrow the late M. de Bouillon sent for his most confidential friends, particularly desiring that M. du Plessis should be among them, and discussed with them the best means to carry out his wishes. Next he summoned his council and the chief officers of his household and told them that for certain reasons M. des Avelles was not to remain governor, and, at the same time, having taken the keys from him he put them into the charge of Messrs du Plessis, de la Laube, D'Espan, d'Arson and de la Marcillière, which last was a Councillor of the Great Council. He bade them summon the officers and guards of the castle and inform them of their lord the Duke of Bouillon's intention of delivering the keys into the keeping of M. de la Laube, lieutenant of his company. And thus was the city secured. M. des Avelles left within the next four-and-twenty hours. Two days later the Duke died, making a very Christian end and placing in God's hands his wife, his children and his dukedom ; and in spite of his death we went on living in Sedan as peacefully as before.

Shortly after the death of the Duke his wife had occasion to send to various places to arrange several matters arising out of her husband's death. Among others was a mission to the Duke of Cleves, a relative bearing the same name as the late M. de Bouillon, who, conjointly with the late Prince Frederic, Elector Palatine, had been left executor of the Duke's will. The Duchess begged M. du Plessis to undertake this journey and putting the will into his hands bade him take it to the

Duke of Cleves and pray him to accept the guardianship of her children as well as the executorship of the aforesaid will. There was reason to fear lest the widowed Duchess should make the King of France jealous by thus approaching a foreigner ; moreover the difficulties of the negotiation were enhanced by the illness of the Duke of Cleves which had robbed him of speech, and to some extent of his wits. His council also were much divided in policy, some favouring Spain and some other princes. Matters were, however, settled to the satisfaction of the Duchess and the young lords, her children, and in three weeks he was back in Sedan. Soon after his return the Duke of Cleves' ambassadors arrived with the promised reply, and with a further charge to go on to the King of France to beg his good graces for the widow and the Duke's wards. In the Court of Cleves his best friends were M. de Wacktendoutz, Marshal of Cleves, M. Jettell and M. Pallant de Bredebent, all gentlemen of noble birth and important officials both in the State as well as in the household of the Duke, and all professing the reformed religion. Since their first meeting M. du Plessis has kept up a correspondence with M. de Pallant de Bredebent, whose house is not far from either Hambach or Juliers. It was there that he received M. du Plessis on his mission to the Duke.

On his return M. du Plessis resumed his visits to me and for eight months hardly a day passed that we did not spend two or three hours together. Even during his journey to Cleves he wrote to me. I was planning to go into France on business of my own and I was inclined to hurry my departure so as to break this habit of familiarity, for I was afraid lest there might be some who might speak evil of it. Just as I was turning this possibility over in my mind he told me how greatly he wanted to marry me, which I felt did me honour. At the same time I told him plainly that I could not tell him my wishes until I had learnt what were the wishes of Mlle de Buhy, his mother, and M. de Buhy, his brother,

through their letters, so that I might know whether our marriage would be agreeable to them. Mlle de Buhy was in Bourbonnais and M. de Buhy, who had taken up arms again since the troubles in France still went on, was Governor of St Liénart in Limousin. M. du Plessis sent an express messenger who brought back answers from his mother and his brother such as he desired; there were also letters for me assuring me that if God made this marriage it would be pleasing to them and that they hoped it would take place. They also wrote to M. de Lizi, a nobleman of good family and formerly a favourite of King Henri II, and near kinsman and very good friend, begging him in their absence to play the part of a father to M. du Plessis. M. de Lizi sent me their letters, speaking very affectionately of M. du Plessis, saying that he had but one son but that he would have given the better part of all that he possessed to have him such a one as M. du Plessis. After telling him that I should count myself happy if God willed that the matter might prove pleasing to those on whom I depended, I asked for time, before finally declaring myself, to write to Mlle de la Borde, my mother and my other relations to know what their will was. I wrote to all of them as of a thing I had at heart but at the same time I would go no further in the matter without their permission. I also asked advice of the relations of my late husband, M. de Feuquères, and other of my friends. All this took a long time so that it was June 1575 before we had answers from everybody.

God showed how He had ordained my marriage for my welfare by the general consent of all those whom we had consulted. Those who knew M. du Plessis thought me very lucky and advised me to carry through the affair quickly, and those who did not know him left the matter entirely to me. Thus having the consent of all our respective relatives to our marriage we drew up a settlement together, which we laid before M. de Lizi. He approved of it, so that we had no need of a lawyer and

nothing in it was changed. This settlement was then sent to Mlle de Buhy for her approval and ratification. She sent it to M. de Lizi confirming it word by word, and thereupon our contract of marriage was drawn up and passed by the notaries of Donchery, which is a French town situated on the Meuse and a league from Sedan. Now during all these comings and goings the time slipped by, and several of those who were living in Sedan observing how often M. du Plessis went to call on me began to think that he must want to marry me. Some among them suggested other marriages to him with rich girls and heiresses, and did all they could to set him against me in favour of others, saying that with the gifts he had received from God added to those with which he was born he ought to look higher for a wife. But since the day when he had spoken to me he would never listen to any other proposals. They even offered to tell him, in case he was really thinking of marrying me, the whole truth about my fortune, both from my marriage settlements and my inheritance from my father. But he replied that when he wanted information on the subject he would ask me myself, and that a fortune was the last thing one should think about in marriage. The main things were the manners and habits of those who intended to pass their lives together, and above all the fear of God and an unsullied reputation. ✓

During this year of 1575 M. du Plessis, at my request, wrote a discourse on Life and Death, together with a translation of some of Seneca's letters. It has since been printed, first in Geneva, then in Paris and in various other places, translated into almost every language and very well received by those of both religions.

CHAPTER V

CIVIL WAR : 1575-1577

AT the end of August trustworthy news reached Sedan that a levy of mercenaries had been raised by M. de Thoré for the purpose of rescuing the Duke of Alençon. M. du Plessis, who had waited on at Sedan with the express purpose of serving on the very first occasion, decided to join them. Before his departure we were betrothed in the presence of M. de Lizi, M. d'Heudreville, and Messrs de Luynes, *conseiller de Parlement*, and du Pin, since Secretary of State for Navarre, and nowadays *Intendant des Finances* of France, and we and they all signed the contract.

After which he left Sedan and he and those he accompanied made their first halt at Buzancy where their troops forgathered. Throughout the whole of this journey he and the late M. de Mouy were always together and shared the same lodgings, for not only were they nearly related and great friends, but they had also carried through several enterprises at their own cost whilst living at Sedan with the object of furthering the march of these mercenaries ; and a great expense it had put them to. I have often heard him say that their efforts were brought to naught by certain people who wanted to gain reputation without being willing to work for it. Their troops might number five hundred harquebusiers and fifty gentlemen, and, so as to preserve order, M. Espau was appointed their commander with M. du Plessis and M. de Mouy as his lieutenants. They marched by the Metz country and Lorraine, crossing several rivers on their way. M. de Guise and his troops marched in the same direction



OLD LONDON BRIDGE
(From Visscher's Panorama of London, 1616)

and never more than three or four leagues from them; this caused some of their men-at-arms to slip off and in consequence certain of their company advised that they should scatter and retreat. Notwithstanding this advice their project held and they reached the frontier of Germany without hurt though not without many alarms and fears. On their arrival at the place where they should have met M. de Thoré no news of him was to be had; they therefore resolved to send to the Count of Nassau to ask permission to enter his territory, living at their own expense and those who had money paying for those who had none. M. du Plessis was chosen as their envoy to the aforesaid Count, but as he was starting some of M. de Clervant's troops appeared with whom he spoke and from whom he learnt that the army was close by. The following day they joined forces to their great joy. A story that I have often heard him tell should not be forgotten, that, on this very evening when news of the army's approach reached them, a great combat with lances of fire was seen in the sky which lasted over two hours and on which every eye was fixed. Many thought it an ill omen although M. du Plessis did what he could to explain it by some natural cause. Having joined M. de Thoré they entered France and crossing the Meuse marched direct to Attigny, a village situated on the Aisne. Here they tarried several days—long enough to allow M. de Guise to come up with them. M. de Thoré, finding himself importuned by the mercenaries who demanded their pay before they would unfurl their colours, begged M. du Plessis to go to Sedan and try to collect as much money as he could as a voluntary contribution. M. du Plessis agreed although he told M. de Thoré that he had no hope of succeeding and that the refugees were the only people he could beg from and they had barely enough for their own needs.

A few days earlier M. du Plessis, foreseeing trouble, had advised M. de Thoré to keep his troops better together, avoiding the richer towns and letting their

citizens know from day to day that if they did not buy themselves off by a reasonable sum the mercenaries would be quartered on them and there is little doubt but that the towns would have paid up. The troopers too could have been well enough lodged outside the towns just for a mere halt on their march. And by this means M. de Thoré could have raised enough to pay his mercenaries, without the least doubt, for there were only some fifteen hundred who refused to take their oaths of service before they had had their money. M. du Plessis finding, as he expected, that it was out of the question to raise money in Sedan left the day after he arrived. M. d'Heudreville accompanied him to the city boundary and on separating asked him what he thought of the army. "Pride goeth before a fall," M. du Plessis replied and added, for he spoke very confidentially to M. d'Heudreville, that within three days they would be defeated and all because of their chief's arrogance and the ill-management of everything. And thereupon he returned to Attigny where M. de Thoré was and where he found nothing to give him more hope than he had had when he left. He and M. de Mouy were lodged together in a small village near by.

The army advanced on the Marne and after camping three times arrived within three leagues of it and halted in the outskirts of Fismes and Barochies between the Marne and river Aisne. They were followed by the King's army under M. de Guise with all possible haste. The same evening that they reached Fismes M. de Fervaques, *maréchal de camp* in the King's army, with fifty horse, came reconnoitring quite close to their camp, and having crossed the Aisne at Pontaver while following their opponents step by step, a little skirmish took place between Ronsy and Pontaver in a meadow, in which M. du Plessis and M. de la Mothe Juranville fought and took several prisoners. From them they learnt that M. de Guise was determined to contest the passage of the Marne. On the morrow they left at break of day

and pressed on, although harassed from time to time by the enemy who sent mounted harquebusiers against them both to right and to left in the forest, so as to retard their speed, or who attacked their rear with little skirmishes so as to force them to face about to repulse them. M. du Plessis was mixed up in most of these skirmishes and he even had a shot from an arquebus in his cuirass but it did him no harm. M. de Thoré was advised to make up his mind once for all either to fight or to retreat and on the whole he inclined to retreat without fighting. This he could have done, according to what was generally said, by reinforcing the rearguard of the retreat sufficiently to withstand the attacks of the enemy so that the main army could have continued its march across the river, baggage first, then infantry, then the mercenaries and finally all who were left behind. The locality was suitable for this because the troops which would cross last commanded the top of a hill, which the enemy could not attack except by very difficult approaches and then only one horseman at a time, so that the enemy could see nothing ahead nor perceive what was taking place behind the hill. This advice was thought good and the army was ready to follow it but M. de Thoré was incapable of making up his mind one way or the other. At one moment he gave directions in accordance with a resolution to fight and the next those proper to a retreat, and in the end as he determined neither to fight nor to retreat in disorder the enemy took advantage of his wavering and, pursuing their plan, forced a battle half a league from the river Marne.¹ They attacked in four companies of men-at-arms in front flanked by mounted harquebusiers who rode out of the forest on their right hand and thus obliged M. de Thoré, however much at disadvantage he might be, to fight. He therefore ordered his ensign, M. de Pontillant, to charge. M. de Mouy and M. du Plessis were both included in the troop, no more than eighteen in all, and scarcely had they charged

¹ The battle of Dormans, 10th Oct. 1575.

before they were all killed, wounded or prisoners. M. de Clervant also charged but few of his mercenaries followed him and he himself was taken prisoner. M. de Thoré retreated without fighting and so did all the rest of his army as well as the mercenaries, who fled as far as Marigny sur Orbaiz. That evening they sent an envoy to the enemy with a surrender. M. de Guise was wounded while pursuing his victory which is matter for history. I return to M. du Plessis without stopping to mention others. He was made prisoner by the company under the Viscount Jean de Tavannes¹ reinforced by that of M. Guillaume de Tavannes¹ his elder brother, but he actually surrendered to a Burgundian gentleman, named la Borde, who belonged to the elder M. de Tavannes. M. du Plessis took part in the charge mounted on a tired horse and had taken off his head-piece, his brassards and his "cassettes." God watched over him and he got nothing worse than a blow from a lance which was nothing because the enemy rode at no more than a trot. As soon as he was seized one of the company wanted to kill him but the aforesaid de la Borde prevented it. He demanded his purse which M. du Plessis gave up. It held some thirty double ducats and two letters from me, one of which was addressed to M. du Plessis and the other to M. de Boinville, which was the name of an estate in Beausse. He begged M. de la Borde take care of them as they were letters from his mistress. They mounted him on an unshod horse and marched him with the rest in battle array, but anyone could see he was a prisoner because he was disarmed. M. de Guise's wound made many people very bitter and M. du Plessis was in danger of his life on several occasions.

After crossing the river they halted on a hill near to Marigny sur Orbaiz. From thence they saw the German mercenaries leaving the village and it looked as

¹ Guillaume de Saulx, Comte de Tavannes, 1553-1633, Jean de Saulx, Vicomte de Tavannes, 1555-1629, sons of Gaspard de Saulx-Tavannes, Marshal of France.

if they were returning to charge, whereas they only wanted to surrender. Had they charged it might have altered the whole result of the battle because the main army of M. de Guise followed the victorious troops at too great a distance. During this halt on the hill M. du Plessis was asked why he had taken up arms? Answer: for religion's sake. Whether he would not change his religion? Answer: he would die sooner. Whether he were not one of the Politiques? Answer: it was plain that at his age one did not meddle with such matters. Whether he were not one of the "malcontents."¹ Seeing himself pressed he very truthfully replied that he was very ill-contented that every man did not get his due, including the mercenaries, and in his place they would have been as ill-contented as he was because the mercenaries had been admitted to composition instead of being sent off with a sound beating with peeled rods as they ought. He spoke so courteously that some of them seemed pleased with what they heard. Most of the questions were put to him by the two marshals de Biron² and de Retz, neither of whom knew him, as was in fact the case with all those present.

Whilst the surrender of the mercenaries was taking place there chanced to pass by the son of that M. des Avelles, who had been governor of the castle of Sedan and who had lost his post as mentioned before, and whose son had taken service under M. de Guise. He knew M. du Plessis as he had often met him at Sedan and would willingly have done him an ill-turn, but happily he did not notice him. There also passed by a spy, named Baron, who had breakfasted with him the day before, and who had come to give information to M. de Guise but he also never saw him. Whence M. du Plessis felt assured that God would help him.

The quarters of those who took him prisoner were at Damery on the Marne. M. du Plessis was most anxious

¹ The Duc d'Alençon's party.

² Armand de Gontaut Biron, 1524-1592, Marshal of France.

to get rid of various compromising papers which he had on him as well as letters from divers Princes and countries but this he found it impossible to do, so closely was he watched. But on their reaching Damery he hastened to stable his horse and hastily pulling out his papers he stuffed them between the thatch of a low bit of roofing. This was on the 10th Oct. 1575. At supper he became quite friendly with his captors but on the following morning, the 11th Oct., Marshal de Retz ordered M. de la Borde to search his prisoner for papers, because several of the other prisoners were found to carry them. M. de la Borde came to M. du Plessis with many excuses and expressing his great regret at having to carry out orders, but as they were extremely explicit he dared not disobey. M. du Plessis had no doubt that he was ordered to kill him and made answer that he was entirely in his hands. At length M. de la Borde spoke out plainly and asked M. du Plessis to empty his pockets and let him see their contents. M. du Plessis thereupon begged him to search them for himself for his greater assurance, and glad enough he was that he had got rid of his papers overnight. On the 12th Oct. they reached Ventueil. The lady of that district was a protestant and a friend of M. du Plessis'. She entertained M. de Tavannes to whom M. du Plessis had been presented the day before. M. de Tavannes was charmed with him and his conversation and wanted to take him to the banquet which the lady had prepared. M. du Plessis excused himself saying that he felt ill and that his shoulder had been bruised by a blow from a lance in the charge; on the morrow he made the same excuse and finally he besought M. de Tavannes not to drag him in triumph before the eyes of the ladies. This of course was all done to avoid being recognized by his friend who would have greeted him by name, thinking no harm, whereas he did not desire this because he was well known to have been employed on various missions. From this place they went to a village called Champagne not far from Chateau Thierry, where he was introduced

to the elder M. de Tavannes. Here he was confronted with the rest of the prisoners in the hope that some would recognize him, but once more God watched over him for M. de Mouy, badly wounded, was taken to his cousin's, M. de Liancourt's house; M. de Pontillant was killed; M. de Longjumeau escaped and thus his companions were all scattered some here, some there.

Thus, when questioned as to who he was and whence he came, he answered that his name was Boinville, a poor cadet of Beausse, and that he possessed an income of no more than 300 livres, and so on. M. de Beauvoisin, M. de Tavannes' lieutenant, was told to make inquiries of two gentlemen of Beausse, M. de Orgenis and M. Jaudray at that time attached to M. d'Aumale.¹ These gentlemen confirmed M. de Plessis' statements under the impression that he was really the Boinville whom they knew, and who they said possessed no more than he stated, if as much, and who was a protestant and a cadet of his house. M. de Beauvoisin thereupon conceived a high opinion of M. du Plessis' integrity and praised him for it to M. de Tavannes and all the others. His ransom was fixed at one hundred crowns.

From this day forth M. de Tavannes showed the greatest pleasure in conversing with him and usually made him dine in his company. M. du Plessis spoke very freely above all on the religious differences between them. M. de Tavannes liked him so well that he proposed that he should go on living with him free in conscience and religion and, even during the troubles, that he should live in his household though without bearing arms. M. du Plessis thanked him but excused himself. His captors also liked him, trusted him entirely and allowed him to walk about alone. Truth is that at first a watch was kept on him, but he told them plainly he must know how he stood with them. If he were on parole he would die sooner than break it, but if he were

¹ Charles de Lorraine, Duc d'Aumale, 1554-1631, grandson of Claude, 1st Duc de Guise.

guarded then he should consider himself free from his parole. After that they let him go where he would all day. He came back each night to their lodging but he was very glad to be allowed to keep himself all day out of the way of any chance person who might recognize him. Also he wearied with the blasphemies and licentiousness of some among them which he never failed to reprove and remonstrate against very freely, although in such a way that no one took offence. Two worrying occurrences troubled him during his imprisonment. The first was a command from the king that all prisoners should be sent to him which chilled M. de Tavanne's friendly intention to let him go on parole, and made M. du Plessis implore him to kill him rather than to send him to consume all his small patrimony in a prison. M. de Tavannes promised not to let him out of his hands until he was forced. The second trouble was that whilst marching towards la Brye by the side of M. de Tavannes, so that he could listen to him talk, a lacquey belonging to M. d'Espau recognized him, spoke to him by name and then went off to tell the news to all his company. This lacquey had left his master and had seen M. du Plessis at Sedan a long time before. He kept nothing back of all he knew so that M. du Plessis was threatened by his captors with having to pay a ransom of 2000 crowns. He put a good face on it, however, scoffing at the word of a lacquey, and the aforementioned M. de Beauvoisin went surety for the truth of what he maintained, and assured the gentleman that their prisoner's name was de Boinville and not du Plessis. This mistake arose from having read the direction on M. du Plessis' letters and not what was in them. Amidst all these alarms M. de Vidart, a Basque, and M. de Cormon, his uncle, a Burgundian, each privately showed him a way of escaping and begged him to avail himself of it in consideration of the sort of people he had to do with. However, he refused saying that he had given his word and that they had kept faith with him since. At last he was allowed to send for

his ransom although he dared not send home for fear of disclosing his family name. So instead he sent to Sedan with a letter for M. d'Heudreville, who so managed that the messenger could tell no tales. I sent the money by one of my own men, called Daleu, together with a small horse and a shabby cloak. The man arrived just at the moment when a fresh order came to deliver M. du Plessis up to M. du Mayenne¹ at Montmirail. La Borde was for keeping him but M. de Vidart was determined to let him go since he had kept faith with them. M. de Vidart accompanied him some thousand paces though against the goodwill of the aforesaid la Borde. When they parted M. du Plessis thanked M. de Vidart for the kindness he had shown him and told him, in strict confidence between them, who he really was since he had shown himself so friendly. M. de Vidart urged him to go as quickly as possible lest evil befell him if his name became known. It was on the 20th of October 1575 that his captivity came to an end.

He took his way towards Sedan attended by the man I had sent, and entered the town secretly, for the Duchess had no mind to offend the King by openly receiving those who had borne arms against him. He lodged with my host, M. de Verdavayne, in a building at the back, which was the only place from which he could visit me undiscovered. Mme de Bouillon knew he was there but she was much pleased with his discreet conduct, which was a good example to others and could not offend the King. He was some time there before his followers, who had been all scattered at the defeat, found him out, but one by one they joined him. He renewed his equipment, which had all been lost, and only waited an opportunity either to join the army of mercenaries under the Prince of Condé or to go in search of the Duke of Alençon who was somewhere between Berry and Auvergne. Things being so I had not thought of our wedding taking place

¹ Charles de Lorraine, Duc de Mayenne, 1554-1611, 2nd son of François, 2nd Duc de Guise.

before the troubles were over. But as this time seemed slow in coming M. du Plessis, M. de Lizi and others of our friends thought it was wiser to get the wedding over. Our contract was therefore drawn up by the notaries of Donchery, our banns were published and we were married on the 3rd of January 1576. But just as we had fixed the wedding-day news came that the mercenaries raised by the Duke were marching through Lorraine on their way to France, so that the very same week that we were married M. du Plessis set out one morning before day-break, accompanied by M. de Lizi who had collected every one in Sedan and the neighbourhood who was willing to march with them. They numbered some 80 horse and a few foot-soldiers and took their way towards Jametz; thence to the Bishopric of Verdun and so on to the Vosges. But just as they expected to join the army on the appointed day, near Chaumont in Bassigny, news reached them that it had not stopped there but had gone further on; which was thought to be on account of the unwillingness of those about the Prince to allow better people than themselves to approach him. Thus they were obliged to retire. But before they got this news they had heard that two cornets of horse soldiers were camped on the road and they resolved to defeat them as they went by, attacking them in broad daylight in their village. They and their foot-soldiers advanced very resolutely after offering up prayer. But the difficulty of returning, after learning that the Prince was not in the neighbourhood, made the older men among them abandon this plan and their advice was taken. They therefore broke up their company at Louppy and each led a small party back to the Duchess of Bouillon's territory. M. de Lizi and most of those who had come from Sedan went to Francheval. The same day I was informed of this by a note from M. du Plessis and I went to meet him there. The following day M. de Lizi and the rest were of opinion that they should enter Sedan quite openly but M. du Plessis did not agree. He was

afraid of offending the Duchess and so he decided to retire to Bazeilles for a few days which pleased her, but all the same she sent word that he could come to Sedan provided that he did it secretly.

So back he went to Sedan and stayed there till the 20th March. We then decided to return to France and set out with the intention that M. du Plessis should join the late Duke of Alençon's army. To make the journey easier for him I rode ahorseback with one of my women, leaving the others at Sedan, whence later on they followed me. Our first stopping-place was at Chesne le Pouilleux, near to the place where the King's mercenaries were camped. However, we crossed the whole of Champagne without misadventure, or any unlucky encounter and got to la Borde au Viconte, near Melun, to my eldest brother's house. On the next day I set out for Paris to see if I could get some sort of passport for M. du Plessis under a feigned name, so that he might cross the Seine at Paris and continue his journey towards Moulins in the Bourbonnais, where the Duke was said to be. Once in Paris I got the passport by the help of my friends. I also saw Monseigneur Darèines, one of the presidents in the Parlement de Paris and at that time deputy, along with M. de Beauvais la Nocle, for the protestant churches in the negotiations for peace. I gave him a remonstrance written by M. du Plessis pointing out that the safety of the protestants was not secure unless guarantee towns, and other places where preachings were allowed, outside of the Duke of Alençon's apanage, were assigned to them, for if the Duke abandoned our party, as might very well happen, we should lose all the security which his apanage gave us. However, Messrs de Beauvais and d'Arcines, as well as many others, would not believe that the Duke could abandon us, in which belief they very soon found themselves mistaken. I can testify that M. du Plessis never for a moment expected anything else.

Having got my passport I went back to M. du Plessis whom I had left in my brother's house. We started at

once for Paris, whose gates we found reinforced with guards since I had come through. All the same, after showing our passport, we were let into the city and stayed there two days. Thence we went on to Plessis and from there to Levainville, to my sister's house, Mlle de Vaucelas. Three days later M. du Plessis set out for his journey's end, leaving me with my sister at Levainville. After leaving me M. du Plessis slept at la Briche, at M. de Cherville's house; from thence his way lay through the Gastinois by Montargis and so to St Fargeau near where he found the Duke. It may be mentioned that when passing through a town he pretended to be sent by the King to negotiate the peace, so he always got in and was everywhere well received. He never failed to beg the town authorities to come to a composition with the mercenary troops rather than let them proceed to extremities and said that the King himself would prefer to have it so, seeing that he had at present no army to protect them, and so forth. In this way he induced several towns to send to meet the Duke's army as it approached with offers of money and victuals in good quantities, which might have been husbanded better than they were. As he passed by Belesbat not far from Estampes he learnt that the King was not a quarter of a league off, looking at some houses which he wanted to buy, almost alone and quite open to an attack. A little further on he met a gentleman who has since told him more than once, that if he had only known, he could have seized the principal courtiers without the smallest danger, so little were they suspecting any themselves.

When he reached the Duke he proposed to him a plan by which, if he would consent to it, Verdun might fall into his hands and the Duke listened very readily. But afterwards he told him not to speak about it to anybody, and above all not to Duke Casimir, because by the terms of the capitulation they had promised him Metz, Toul and Verdun as hostage towns, and it was hoped by the Articles of Peace to content him with less; M. du Plessis there-

fore said no more. At this same time a quarrel in the army arose between M. de Turenne and M. de Bussy¹ and their adherents, which, because of the high quality of the chief opponents, caused a great division. M. de Bussy, as Colonel-General of the Duke's troops, had the privilege of bearing the white Ensign. M. de Turenne on the other hand had brought some fine companies of foot-soldiers from Guienne which the churches there had entrusted to him together with a white flag. It was M. de Bussy's contention that nobody but himself was permitted to use a white flag. M. de Turenne maintained that the flag given to him was sacred like all flags, and he was bound to return it just as he had received it. The Duke was inclined to favour M. de Bussy. M. du Plessis was asked to settle the quarrel and proposed as a way out of the difficulty that, as all flags of one colour were proper to colonels only, M. de Turenne should have a blue or violet one, leaving the white for M. de Bussy, which was the way it was arranged between the colonel of the French infantry and the Piedmontese colonel. However, peace soon after being made M. de Turenne's troops withdrew highly dissatisfied.

Peace was at last made at Chastenoy in Gastinois on the 7th May 1576, M. du Plessis taking a share in most of the discussions. This matter settled he obtained leave of absence from the Duke so that he could attend to his own private affairs. He could easily see by the temper of many that this peace would not last long. As he was at supper with M. de Laval,² to whom he had gone to bid farewell expecting to start the following morning, the Duke sent for him and offered him the choice of going either to England or to Germany with news of the peace, and also to explain to the foreign Princes his reasons for making peace in the same way as he had previously explained his reasons for going to war. M. du Plessis

¹ Louis de Clermont de Bussy d'Amboise, assassinated 1579.

² Paul de Coligny, Comte de Laval, d. 1585, son of François de Coligny, seigneur d'Andelot.

preferred going to England as the journey was shorter. Dispatches for England were therefore given him and he went to Sens to meet the Queen Mother. She received him well enough but let him know plainly that she was quite aware that he had been mixed up with the affair of St Germain and Mantes. From Sens he went to Paris to see the King and I travelled to meet him there. We stayed in Paris for two months because the Duke's treasurer would give him no money for his journey, nor anything for suitable presents for some of the English lords. The reason for this was that the Queen Mother had succeeded in turning the Duke against the project for she was afraid the mission would serve to unite the Duke and the Queen of England more closely, so that the Duke's treasurer, who was a son of Marcel, was given a counter order not to pay M. du Plessis. All the same when M. du Plessis complained of him to the Duke he was always told to go back and press for payment. At last after a long stay in Paris the journey was given up and we went off to Buhy. M. du Plessis' brother, M. de Buhy, had been promised the governorship of Loches in the Duke's apanage but he had never been able to obtain it for the same reason; which was the Queen Mother's ill will on account of the affair of St Germain and Mantes. From the fact that M. du Plessis' journey into England was given up many people foretold trouble and all the more because M. de la Vergne, who was a catholic, really was sent to Germany.

It was just at this time that the League, which called itself 'holy', was founded in Picardy. M. du Plessis sent out warnings from the moment of its birth to the Duke, to the King of Navarre and more especially to M. de la Noue. The first aim of the League was to turn the Estates General, which had been promised by the Edict, into an instrument for the condemnation of all professing the reformed religion. To achieve this they aimed at controlling the towns, the clergy and the nobles in the provincial Estates, so that these Estates

should all be of one religion and all give identical instructions to the deputies sent to represent them at the Estates General, and thus secure that similar resolutions should be passed by that body. M. du Plessis set himself to combat this in several ways. First, he used persuasion to retard the meeting of the Estates General on the grounds that the public was not yet ready so soon after the civil war, arguing that a medicine of this sort ought to be preceded by various other medicinal concoctions, that one ought to wait till people were on better terms with each other and so forth. On these points he held many discussions, even with M. de la Noue himself. Secondly, he opposed the League's resolutions in the Provincial Estates by various papers written privily and sent to them, more particularly to the *Baillage of Senlis* to which he belonged. In this baillage he secured a resolution for the maintenance of the Edict, and he was moreover elected by one and all, even the clergy, to represent them at the Estates General. From this he excused himself on the grounds that the Duke was employing him on affairs of importance. Thirdly, by exposing the worthlessness of all Estates whether provincial or general. Fourthly, by writing a remonstrance addressed to the Estates, which was printed and for the most part very well received, in which he pointed out that the best ordinances which could be made by the Estates were useless without peace, that peace depended on the maintenance of the Edict, and so on. This remonstrance was printed with the consent of the late chancellor de Birague,¹ who was asleep when the first page, which was quite unimportant, was read aloud to him. Several *maîtres des requêtes* read the whole of it and were glad it was printed because they really wanted to have peace. However, it nearly cost him his life between Blois and Chasteaudun through falling in with some of his neighbours who belonged to the League.

¹ René de Birague or Birago, b. at Milan 1509, chancellor 1573, cardinal 1578, d. 1583.

They were very close on his heels but he turned aside towards Ougues, a village and a house belonging to a protestant gentleman who was away at Blois.

Whilst he was thus travelling to and fro M. du Plessis was urgently summoned by the Duke, who was then at Tours. The Duke wanted to send him to England and this time he was in earnest. It was plain, however, that the Duke meant to desert his party and return to Court so M. du Plessis refused this mission and took his leave, saying at the end quite plainly that he saw that the Duke was about to pursue a course where he could be of no service to him in conscience or in honour. From this moment he made up his mind to join the King of Navarre, who had already written to him an invitation on the very special recommendation of M. de Foix and M. de la Noue with others of the Religion; and in truth it was such a recommendation that the King of Navarre stared with surprise. M. de Foix told the King, laughingly, that he had better find out such an obvious truth for himself. So M. du Plessis went off to Agen where the King of Navarre was and stayed there several days. The King of Navarre took him into his service and from that day forth used him in his council and in all his affairs. It was decided to oppose by a resort to arms the deliberations of the Estates General at Blois, which, as the King sent word to the King of Navarre, were resolved that only one religion should be allowed in France. The King of Navarre sent M. du Plessis to treat with M. de Montmorenci,¹ to induce him to take arms for his party, which he was very willing to do and indeed was on the very point of declaring himself when he excused himself. His reason of so doing was the King's assumption of the leadership of the League, and also his indisposition for the fatigue of war. He held a secret conversation with M. du Plessis at Chantilly where the chiefs of the league in Picardy and Isle de France were staying.

On his return from Gascony he found me brought to

¹ François de Montmorenci, 2nd Duke, 1530-1579.

bed with our eldest daughter, who was named Marthe, and who was baptized at Plessis where I had gone for my confinement. Her godfather was M. de Sauseuse, a man of the highest distinction for piety and doctrine. It should be noted that the same day that I was seized with the pains of childbirth, and whilst M. du Plessis was on his way to me, he knew in his heart that I was in labour. He wrote down in his diary what he had felt on the very same day, namely the 17th of December 1576, so that on his arrival, before a word was said by anyone, he told us the day of my confinement and found that he was right.

The times waxing more troubled he resolved to join the King of Navarre, crossing France and the zone of war. On his way he passed by Chastelier in Touraine and stopped at M. de la Noue's house, but found him already gone. However, Mme de la Noue was there and he also met M. de Chassin-court who afterwards acted as agent for the churches to the King. While at Chastelier he wrote a letter to the Duke, who was at Blois with the King, pointing out the wrong he had done himself in rejecting the almost certain hope he had of a great position in England, in the Low Countries and in Germany. This letter was shown to the Queen Mother who was greatly annoyed with it. The effect of the Duke's conduct was clearly manifest afterwards by the difficulties he met with in his negotiations with foreign princes where previously everything had been quite easy. Mme de la Noue wanted to rejoin her husband and so she and M. du Plessis set out together. The first day's journey brought them to la Tricherie, in Chastellerault and Poitiers, which was besieged by the Viscount de la Guierches' company but hearing that it was Mme de la Noue they let her through their lines, because of the high respect in which her husband was held. But some of her company, who were discovered from their talk to be from la Rochelle, were taken to Blois and had much ado to get free again. M. du Plessis was let go although one of his grooms, whom he had been teaching all the way to

call him a different name to his own, did in his fright give him his correct name; but the fact is there are several others bearing the same name and his calmness put them off their guard. To avoid further danger they wrote to M. Sainte Solene who was in Poitiers, and who was a friend of M. de la Noue's, to ask him to allow the aforesaid lady to stop at Jaulnay, a village between la Tricherie and Poitiers, and to bring with her some five-and-thirty horsemen. And thereupon they set out. At Jaulnay, M. de Sainte Solene's place, they found a company of de Landreau's camped. This said de Landreau was the chief of the League in those parts who had seized Jaulnay while M. de la Sainte Solene was unable to leave Poitiers on account of a tumult which had broken out in that city. The travellers passed through and some few paces further on turned aside to Monstreuil le Bonin, a house owned by M. de la Noue. There they found M. de Landreau himself and the late M. de Tremouille with him and two hundred lancers as well. For several hours the danger of being recognized was very great but they were allowed to go on. They slept at Monstreuil. On the morrow, between Monstreuil and Loue whilst they were wasting time with looking at the ruins of Lusignan,¹ they were attacked by some of M. de Chemeraut's company who might number twenty cuirasses. They turned and confronted them with so much boldness, and held their own with so much firmness that they were allowed to go on their way. Thus they passed through three separate dangers in as many days and at a time when the disturbances caused by the leaguers were very troublesome, and when a very special hatred was felt for M. du Plessis by those among them who knew him for a man of high value and of great devotion to his religion. At length they reached St Jean d'Angely, whence he went on to meet the King of Navarre at Agen.

¹ Lusignan, a celebrated castle which Melusine la Fée was supposed to have founded. Taken and lost twice by the huguenots the king ordered its demolition in 1575; M. de Chemeraut carried out the work of destruction.

He stayed with him during part of this war. He wrote the King of Navarre's declaration setting forth the just reasons which had moved him to take up arms; he also took part in the siege of Marmande and had his share in negotiating a month's truce to raise the siege, between the Marshal de Biron and M. de Foix to whom were joined Messrs de Segur Pardaillan¹ and de Gratemx, chancellor of Navarre.

Towards the end of this truce he was sent on a mission to the Queen of England with plenary power in all the King of Navarre's affairs in England, Scotland, the Low Countries, Germany, etc. He even had a number of commissions and blank forms with a seal to sign all dispatches according as he thought fit, which is a power very rarely given to anyone. He had to pass through M. de Mayenne's army in Xaintonge. He was warned at the same time by M. de Foix that Admiral de Villars,² at that time *lieutenant général* in Guienne, had been very particularly commanded by the King to be on the watch for him and to seize him on his way, for his journey having been put off more than once had become known to the enemy. He got to Rochelle, however, though not without great danger. He was kept waiting several days at Rochelle because the Prince de Condé was desirous for certain reasons of his own, namely, an appeal to the Queen of England on his behalf that his messenger, Captain Lisle, should reach her before M. du Plessis did. Through this delay he lost the advantage of a fleet sailing for England. He embarked in the Isle de Rhé in the first ship he found which was one laden with salt, vexed to the heart that he had lost the escort of the fleet. Once out at sea, by an extraordinary intuition, he told M. du Ronday de Loudun, a notable person who accompanied him, that within a short time they would fall into extreme danger but that God would bring them

¹ Segur de Pardaillan, a family of Perigord.

² André de Brancas, Sieur de Villars, important member of the League, killed 1595.

safely through it. That very same evening, off the Isle Dieu, they were attacked by the King's ships and by some from the coast of Olonne, who captured them and almost succeeded in boarding them and putting them all to the sword out of hand. They did strip them, both M. du Plessis and all his men; some they tied by their heels and plunged them into the water threatening to drown them or worse, to make them say who they were. By God's grace they all held firm remembering that he had bade them say that they were merchants. M. du Plessis had had just sufficient warning to hide all his commissions, instructions, letters and blank forms in the pump. M. du Ronday, who accompanied him, when very straitly pressed, did say: "I belong to this *gentleman*," meaning M. du Plessis, who marked his words and felt how dangerous they were. Another of his men although a dagger was at his throat would not give up a belt with eight hundred crowns in it. But M. du Plessis got him to yield at last for he was afraid they would murder him. There were several trunks full of silk clothes aboard which would have clearly shown that they were not simple merchants but it was God's will that their enemies should not notice them. To get him into their snare they took M. du Plessis apart in the lower part of the ship; there they talked in his hearing of going to la Rochelle or to the Isle de Rhé and thereupon his men begged him to say who he was and to show his passport. But he considered that if they were enemies it would be his certain death, and that even if they were friends they might still kill him to conceal the blunder they had made. At last they left them carrying away everything with them, even the sails, the nautical instruments, the anchor, lead and all. It looked as if they had not really wished to return to shore to give an account of their doings to Sandreau, admiral of that coast, while M. du Plessis, on his part, pretended to be willing to be taken to him although he would have been in the greatest danger had they done so. For not

only had the King expressly commanded that he should be seized wherever he was found, but also the people along that coast were enraged at the rough way in which they had been treated by M. de Mouy when he took les Sables d'Olonne. M. de Mouy was a cousin of M. du Plessis and one of his best friends; he was still at Olonne with the Poitou infantry whose colonel he was. His treatment of the town had been so severe that the inhabitants had flung themselves into the sea in despair. M. du Plessis returned to Rochelle in the salt ship. There an offer was made to make good his losses out of the fortune of his captor's father-in-law. But he was not willing that the innocent should suffer for the guilty. This happened in April 1577.

It should be noted that six or seven months before this date M. du Plessis had told me that he was about to run into some extreme peril but that he had God's assurance that he should come safely through it. He had said the same thing to Mme de la Noue, who, recalling his words when they were stopped at la Tricherie after getting safely through all the other dangers on their road, asked him if he thought that this was the peril of which he had spoken to her. He said no, but that in a very short time he should fall into it but that he had full confidence that God would bring him safely through. Eight days later he got back to la Rochelle where he got his outfit together again and borrowed enough money for his journey from M. de Rohan, who lent it him very willingly. And so he passed over into England whence he sent for me to join him.

CHAPTER VI

LIFE IN ENGLAND AND THE LOW COUNTRIES

I WENT to join him in London where we stayed for eighteen months in great peace, although busy all the time with many matters. He was very well received from the first moment, and of the hundred thousand crowns which he begged of the Queen of England she agreed to give eighty thousand. But between the promise and the performance the whole negotiation was upset partly by the capture of la Charité by the Duke of Anjou (formerly the Duke of Alençon) and partly by the change in the opinions of the Marshal de Montmorenci, the governor of Languedoc.¹ The effect of these two events was such that his friends advised him to leave without attempting to do anything more. He made answer that the inconstancy of the sea could be turned to account by those who were wise, and that what one wave let sink in the trough another lifted up, and for his part he meant to try what patience would do. And in truth he brought the Queen back to her first goodwill to his business. A sum was actually sent to Hambourg, in Germany, to be employed in securing foreign aid. M. du Plessis' intimacy with the most important people about the Queen was a great help. So was the confidence of the English government in him, which went to such lengths that his advice was even asked on matters which only concerned England.

During our stay in England the Low Countries, which had in no wise been settled by an Edict of Peace, now

¹ Henri de Montmorenci, Comte de Damville, Marshal of France and Governor of Languedoc. After 1579 Duc de Montmorenci, Connétable, 1593.

broke out into fresh troubles in consequence of the behaviour of Don John of Austria. This was of such a nature that even the catholic provinces called upon the Prince of Orange for help, and united their fortunes with Holland and Zealand. Furthermore, in order to resist the power of Spain they wanted to lean upon the friendship and help of the Queen of England. M. du Plessis, being on the spot, was asked to act for the Prince of Orange and the Estates. At the same time the Queen and her council also applied to him, for both sides knew that he put the welfare of the true religion before all other things. His chief friends in England were Sir Francis Walsingham, Secretary of State, and Sir Philip Sidney, son of the Viceroy of Ireland, nephew of the Earl of Leicester, and since son-in-law to the aforesaid Sir Francis Walsingham. Sir Philip was the most highly accomplished gentleman in England. Sometime after this date he did M. du Plessis the honour to translate into English his book on the "Truth of the Christian Religion." Paulet,¹ Killigrew,² Davidson,³ Rogers and others employed in notable embassies were among his English friends. Among the French were the ministers of the French Church in England, François L'Oyseleur, generally called de Villiers, who has since had charge of the affairs of the late Prince of Orange, and Robert le Maçon, called de la Fontaine, both very excellent pastors.

At this date the many virtues of the King of Navarre were not known in foreign countries. By the artful tricks of certain evil speakers he was suspected by most people, as if he were not sincere in his championship of the protestant religion but had really maintained some sort of intelligence with its enemies. This did him a great deal of harm and all the more because these opinions

¹ Paulet, Amias, Sir. He was ambassador in Paris 1576-1579. Mlle du Plessis' memory for dates is not always correct.

² Sir Henry Killigrew, d. 1603, diplomatist in Scotland, the Low Countries and France.

³ Wm. Davidson, d. 1608, Secretary of State, sent on mission to Low Countries 1577.

were held by those who professed themselves protestants. M. du Plessis worked hard to root out these errors and succeeded in placing the King of Navarre's reputation on such a sure foundation that it was easy for those who followed to build on it. In September 1577 peace was made in France and this gave him less to do in England. However, he had no mind to cross over to France until the fires of civil war had somewhat cooled down. During this time of leisure he occupied himself with composing a treatise on the Church, for he could see that those who denied the truth or befouled it with lies stumbled oftenest on this point. Having written it he submitted it to Messrs de la Fontaine and de Saulsay, two very learned ministers, and after them to ten or twelve others, begging them to note carefully everything they objected to. This they did and meeting in conference a month later a complete agreement was reached. This treatise was soon afterwards translated into every language and by God's grace bore fruit ; so far no reply to it has seen the light. A monk of Rouen, called Corneille, working to refute it by the request of the Baron de Meneville, a near relative of M. du Plessis and a very learned man, came to a knowledge of the truth by his own efforts to contradict it. He unfrocked himself and went to Geneva where he has since become a minister. Sometime after this the book was approved and printed in Geneva, it was received with high praise by the General Synod at Vitray in France, and in England was of great service in appeasing the distractions of the Church which had arisen on account of the ceremonial still retained in that country.

In England in the year 1578 and on the first day of June our daughter Elizabeth was born. Her godfathers were Sir Philip Sidney and Mr Killigrew, and her godmother was Lady Stafford, lady-in-waiting to the Queen of England. The chief reason why M. du Plessis left England in a hurry arose from the negotiation for the marriage of the Duke of Alençon (Anjou) with the Queen

of England, which M. de Rames, of the family of Bagueville, had been sent over to arrange. M. du Plessis heartily disapproved of this marriage both on account of religion and no less for reasons of state, and this notwithstanding that the Queen did him the honour to discuss it with him confidentially. He decided that it would be wiser for him to leave the country and go to Flanders, where he would be able to do more for the service of his master. He took leave of the Queen in the town of Norwich under cover of various matters of business in the Low Countries relating to the King of Navarre. The Queen bade him farewell with fine gifts, and above all with the highest marks of confidence by giving him a cipher to use in secret communications to her. He left me and our children in London until he knew what degree of safety and comfort we should find in the places to which he was going. As on many other occasions God had him in His special care during this journey. For he had intended to cross in the ship, in which all his baggage was, from Gravesend to Flushing. It chanced that the wind was contrary and he therefore rode on to Dover, whence by tacking he got safely to Dunkirk. The master of the ship where his baggage was, on the other hand, just to get a little extra gain, took on board thirty soldiers who pretended they were bound for Flushing. Once out at sea these men pillaged the ship and changing its course they seized the passengers as well as the cargo. In this robbery M. du Plessis lost several works; among others, I have often heard him regret the loss of a history of the troubles in France written in latin, as well as two petitions for peace. He tried all he could to get them back from Mr Wilson,¹ the English Secretary, for soon after these same robbers were captured and hanged and all the papers came into Mr Wilson's hands. But he protested that he had never had them.

M. du Plessis arrived in Flanders in the year 1578

¹ Thomas Wilson, d. 1581; Secretary of State 1578; sent on missions to Low Countries 1574 and 1579.

towards the end of July at the same time that the foreign armies were camped at Rimenem. The Duke Casimir left his army very shortly after, taking with him several cornets of horse. He was bound for Ghent to quell a disturber of the peace there, by name Imbize,¹ who was upsetting the whole country. This Imbize sought the advancement of the religion by the most violent means directed against the Pacification of Ghent,² to which all the Provinces had sworn, and indeed in the end he was the cause of the rupture between them. So both the Prince of Orange and the Estates begged M. du Plessis to travel throughout the Province of Flanders, from town to town, wherever he had made friends in his previous visit to the country. He did this in a quiet way, talking over things with all the most worthy people as well as all the most sensible, pointing out that the methods Imbize was employing were not for edification but very much the contrary. He even wrote a short paper, which can be read in his memoirs arguing that religion must be preached and not imposed by force; idolatry overthrown by the word of God and not by the hammer-blows of men. The result of this journey was that Bruges, Ypres and le Franc dissociated themselves from Ghent and reunited themselves to the whole body of the Estates; and, furthermore, Ghent itself appealed to the Prince of Orange a few days later, rejoined the Union more obedient than before, deprived Imbize of all authority and begged Duke Casimir to leave them alone.

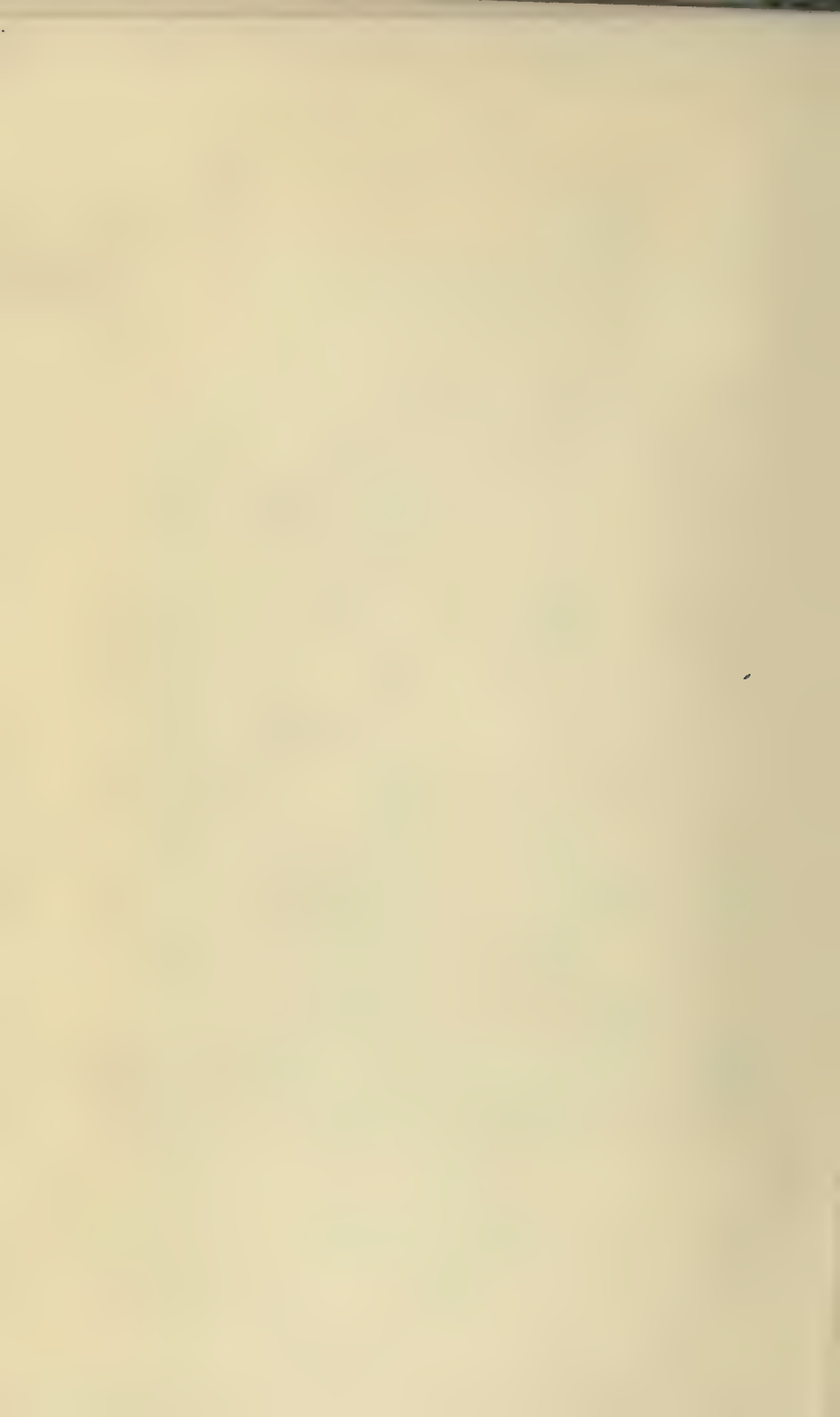
By this time I was once more with M. du Plessis, having embarked in the Thames at London for Antwerp. In this voyage we experienced both the wrath and the mercy of God, for the plague broke out in our ship and some died of it, not our own people but some of those who ate and drank with us. The day after we reached

¹ Imbize, J. van. He conspired with another young noble of Ghent, Ryhove, to raise Ghent against the catholics.

² Treaty between the calvinist and catholic provinces of the Low Countries, 1576.



ANTWERP AND THE SCHELDT



Antwerp the two children of the woman who was foster-mother to our daughter Elizabeth, of whom one had often been suckled with her, were seized with the illness and both were dead in less than twenty-four hours. M. Trescat, a learned man and a minister of God's word in the church of Brussels, who was husband to our nurse, came in great terror to warn us. After a great deal of worry God provided us with another nurse, and none of our family suffered from the risk of infection. It was at this time that the Duke of Guise began to turn France upside-down, though without clearly knowing at which end to begin. To the catholics he spoke of the State; to attract the huguenots he promised full liberty, and even approached the leaders of the religion. The King of Navarre sent M. de Chassin-court to Flanders in haste to ask advice from M. de la Noue and M. du Plessis. Their reply may still be read. It was to the effect that however bad was the treatment with which they met yet a tolerable peace was better than a war however successful; that M. de Guise could not possibly make any honest promises to protestants; that if the Duke really had any proposals to make to the King of Navarre he ought to approach him directly and not through others whom he only approached in order to detach them. In point of fact these tricks came to an end for the Duke had no mind to negotiate with a chief who meant to be really *the* chief of the party.

This all happened in the year 1579, in which year, in spite of all the various affairs in which he had been employed, M. du Plessis began his book on the "truths of the Christian Religion." He had been turning it over in his mind for a very long time and all his early studies had been only a preparation for writing it; for everything had been directed to the end that he might glorify the name of Jesus Christ. He was interrupted, about the month of August, by a long and severe illness before he had reached his fifth chapter. Our eldest son Philip de Mornay was born at this time at Antwerp, on the

20th July. We were living in the Camaerstrate, lodging with a certain M. Landmeter. His godfathers were M. François de la Noue and Artus de Vaudray Seigneur de Mouy, and his godmother was the Lady Mary of Nassau, eldest daughter of the Prince of Orange. Both M. de la Noue and Mlle d'Orange wanted to call the baby after the Prince but I sent an earnest request to them to give him M. du Plessis' name. I was all the more set on this because some months before I was brought to bed I had a dream that I should give birth to a son, and that M. du Plessis and I should dedicate him to God and that his name must be either Philip or Samuel. M. de Mouy finding the other two godparents discussing the child's name, begged on my behalf that he should be called after his father.

M. du Plessis' illness was a low fever accompanied with various dangerous symptoms, among others constant sleeplessness and other very strange troubles. These were attributed partly to overwork, particularly over his book which he worked at every evening after a day busy with all sorts of affairs, and partly to the dregs of a poison which had been given him by a Marseillais the year before. This man very impudently came to supper with him, insinuating himself in the company of the younger M. d'Avantigny in such a way that both gentlemen thought the other knew him. By evening M. du Plessis was dangerously ill with symptoms which seemed inexplicable, and he was ill for several days without any cause which the doctors could assign. Youth and good health and above all continual and violent sickness pulled him through. This Marseillais was seized at Antwerp some little time after, whither he had come with the intention of poisoning the Prince of Orange, induced thereto by the bribes of the Abbé of St Gertruden after the said Abbé had deserted the party of the Estates. The same Abbé, before his desertion of his old party, had made him poison Don John of Austria, and had promised him twenty thousand florins for doing it although he

never paid more than the half. Proofs of all these things, as is generally the case in such matters, were defective, but the facts were certainly true. This fine fellow boasted he could kill a man by only touching him and in truth a colonel in Antwerp, called Adam van der Hulst, died raving mad after only accompanying M. du Plessis who went to see him in order to identify him. The part which M. du Plessis took in the affairs of the Low Countries and the Prince of Orange's friendship for him were the reasons for this attempt on his life. Besides which the Duke of Alençon (Anjou) was at Mons, pushing his claim to the Low Countries with the worst of advisers to help him who made him suspicious of every protestant, even M. du Plessis himself.

M. du Plessis' illness lasted four months although he still transacted business in spite of the fact that he entirely lost the power of writing. During his illness the King of Navarre wrote to ask his advice as to what reply should be made to the King of France's insistent demand that the mass and all the Romish ceremonies should be reinstated in Béarn. The advice he gave I have found among his papers. To put it briefly it was to this effect: that, for the satisfaction of the King of France, a synod should be convoked after the manner of other Princes in his sovereign principality of Béarn, and that a safe conduct should be given to all the theologians of Europe, of both confessions of faith, expenses for their journey to be defrayed and the meeting to be proclaimed everywhere, even in Rome and Spain; whence it would follow that, if they came, the truth would be proclaimed to all his subjects by the very same method by which he designed to instruct the King of France; while, if they refused to come, he would have a good excuse to give to the said King and would teach his people to hate lies. Certain worldly counsel set the King of Navarre against this plan, some people thinking he was too unimportant a Prince to attempt such a thing. M. du Plessis, on the contrary, cited the Duke of Saxony, John Frederick,

who ventured even further in the face of an Emperor and in more dangerous circumstances. Half-way through M. du Plessis' illness we left Antwerp for Ghent, partly on account of the plague which broke out in the house where we lodged and partly for the mere pleasure of a change. The people of that town came to Antwerp to fetch us and furnished a noble lodging on purpose for us. In Ghent, so soon as he felt a little better he went on with his book which he finished not very long after at Antwerp. During all this time I was not free from my share of troubles, my own health bad, he in danger, our family in a foreign land, our private affairs in France in a great mess and bothered with debts both in England and Flanders which we had incurred on behalf of public business. But God always gave me patience and comfort and raised up friends and ways and means for me. So that without worrying M. du Plessis, or at least as little as I could, I managed to arrange for everything.

Whilst we were at Ghent war in France broke out again in April 1580. The King of Navarre sent the late M. d'Hagraville, whom he had already employed more than once in a similar manner, to M. du Plessis, with orders that he was to cross over to England to explain this fresh appeal to arms and to ask for help. This mission annoyed M. du Plessis very much for he considered the war to be neither right nor necessary. He set off to say good-bye to M. de la Noue who was on the point of carrying out an attempt on Lille which they had planned together. M. de la Noue had left his infantry to take part in the siege of Ingelmunster, under the command of M. de Marguettes. On receiving a warning that the Vicomte de Gand was on his way to raise the siege M. de la Noue abandoned his own enterprise to go to the help of his men and thereupon was defeated and taken prisoner. I remember clearly that M. du Plessis never thought well of this siege because of the inexperience of the man in command, and he told M. de la Noue his opinion. M. du Plessis had no sooner

reached Dunkirk than the bad news about M. de la Noue followed him. The Provincial estates sent two of their worthiest members after him to beseech him to turn back in consequence of this disaster. He hesitated to do so because he was leaving the country by the King of Navarre's orders. All the same he consented to delay a few days and joined with them in putting matters into good order, in strengthening various places, in collecting the scattered troops and in garrisoning certain necessary spots so that the trouble did not spread. The Prince of Orange thanked him for his services and so did the Estates General. They sent M. de Saint Aldégonde¹ to him, chief Counsellor of State and a very great person, to talk over the affairs of Flanders with him. As for the provincial Estates of Flanders the whole body besought him to assume control during the absence and captivity of M. de la Noue, with the same authority and appointments. But M. du Plessis excused himself setting his master's need before his own convenience and advancement.

The results of the aforementioned defeat of M. de la Noue having been guarded against M. du Plessis again set out for England. He found it not a little difficult to persuade the Queen that the fresh fighting in France was the result of ripe deliberation. Not that the enemy had not given plenty of provocation but yet not enough, in the opinion of the best informed, to lead to war. Nevertheless, he got fifty thousand crowns from the Queen to be used in Germany, and she furthermore lent the weight of her authority by sending a special embassy to assist in the raising of troops. But in the middle of these negotiations the Prince (Duke of Anjou) arrived in England before M. du Plessis had the slightest warning. He came partly to press his suit to the Queen and partly because Duke Casimir wanted before anything to be rid of him. Contrary to M. du Plessis' advice the Prince asked the Queen for 300,000 crowns, thinking to swell her liberality

¹ Philippe de Marnix, Seigneur de St Aldégonde.

by his own importance which request so offended her that she declined to give anything at all, telling him plainly that the war was unjust, blaming the bad advice he had listened to and bidding him go without further delay. M. du Plessis wanted to stay behind in England to see if he could patch matters up, and this was what all his friends advised him to do. However, the Prince peremptorily forbade him. He told M. du Plessis that he would not have any Frenchman staying behind and M. du Plessis least of all because the Queen had complained bitterly of his behaviour. So he was forced to follow the Prince. He wrote to the Queen on his departure expressing his grief at displeasing her. Whereupon she sent a messenger after him, post-haste, with a letter partly in her own handwriting (which may still be seen among his papers) in which she declared that no foreign gentleman had ever visited England whom she esteemed more highly than she did M. du Plessis, that she had never spoken nor even thought of him in disparaging terms, and she put anything reported to the contrary down to the Prince's deafness.

The Prince landed at Sluys in Flanders and thence went first to Bruges and then on to Ghent, where he stayed one day, and was everywhere very well received. The following night on the point of daybreak the enemy under the Vicomte de Gand and la Motte, governor of Gravelines, attempted to scale the city wall by the help of one of the elbows of a bastion, at which they were working. M. du Plessis had warned them of the danger of this spot before he left for England. By God's help the enemy was repulsed and the next day they continued their march to Antwerp. I remember that on the alarm of this attempt being given M. du Plessis, alone and almost naked, had barely time to bid one of the members of the Estates of Flanders (a man named Burgrave, deputy from Franc, who brought him the news that the enemy had captured the bastion, which was not true), to send for the French troops camped at Audenarde, for

the Scots at Menin and for other troops in various places. For it was better to fight the enemy in the town itself, if they should get in, rather than lose it. He also ordered that some of the bridges in the town should be broken in order to give more time to retard the enemy's advance as well as to give time for help to arrive. Having given these orders he next told me to retreat to the Antwerp gate with my children because this would be the last place where the troops would rally if the city were taken, and that I must be sure to save his nearly finished book; I did as he bade me.

It was about this time that the Prince's negotiations came to a head. At the beginning he pretended to help the Low Countries, next he spoke of protecting them and finally he aspired to their lordship. He based his claim on the argument that the country could not defend itself alone, and that the French were the only people who could help it against Spain. M. du Plessis, who knew the late Duke of Anjou's character as well as the wickedness and rashness of his advisers and their hatred of the true religion, was convinced that their open protestations were incompatible with their secret intentions. He often told the Prince of Orange that if he could get along without the Duke he would be wise to do so; if he could not he had better have him for a helper than for a master; if he had to accept him for a master he ought, at least, to tie him down by conditions that would prevent him from being mischievous. The Prince of Orange, worn out with suffering, broken down by the long-drawn war and by the bitter slanders he had had to endure, made up his mind to take the final step and begged M. du Plessis' assistance. After various public declarations the first result of this decision was seen at Ghent, where the resolution to renounce all obedience to the King of Spain was definitely taken and the election of a new Prince decided on. M. du Plessis gave his help, but only on the assurance that the new prince was to be bound by such conditions, that, humanly

speaking, no harm could follow ; these conditions, however, were immediately relaxed solely because people were too ready to be deceived. I could see that M. du Plessis was shocked at the carelessness with which such a weighty matter was managed. The deputies, in whose hands the negotiations with the Duke of Anjou were placed, allowed themselves to be taken by country roads all the way to Gascony, being feasted wherever they went, instead of going direct to Paris where they could have learnt from their friends what they really had to expect from the Duke.

On M. du Plessis' return to Antwerp whither the hurry of all this business about the Duke called him, he finished his book on the Christian religion. It was printed by Plantin.¹ This work finished he went to France both on urgent private as well as on public business, and was commissioned by the Prince of Orange and the Estates General to point out to the Duke of Anjou the best way to relieve Cambrai, and thence to march triumphant to Antwerp. He first met the Duke secretly at la Ferté Gaucher, and later in open council at Chateau Thierry.

The Duke contented himself with relieving Cambrai without going further, being advised, by his usual councillors, to leave his people alone in their need so that he might get more out of them later on. From Chateau Thierry M. du Plessis went on to Gascony to join the King of Navarre. The King told him that he wanted to keep him with him and never let him go again, making use of the strongest words possible to express his wishes. This settled, the King gave him leave to return to Flanders to fetch his family. He certainly did not find us sorry to see him back. God had given us a son during his absence, who was called Maurice. His godfathers were Count Maurice, the Prince of Orange's son, and M. Languet. His godmother Mlle de Perez, of the family of Lopez Espagnol, a woman of great piety. Three months after his birth we lost the

¹ Christophe Plantin, 1514-1589, celebrated printer.

child, while his father was still away and while my other children lay dangerously ill. M. Languet, who was just like a father to us, also died at this time, and he and our son were both buried at Antwerp. M. Languet's only regret was at not seeing M. du Plessis once more before he died, and had it been possible, he would have left his loving heart with him.

It was about this time that the French troops under Colonel la Garde, who were in garrison at Bergen-op-Zoom, mutinied for their pay and some among them even went so far as to talk of surrendering the town to the Spaniards. Their captains were not involved in the mutiny but all the same they were not sorry to take advantage of it. The Estates begged M. du Plessis to go to Bergen and bring the troops back to their duty, which he did. The same evening that he arrived news came that the enemy were only five leagues away. He was taken the round and shown how strong the guard was so that he might report favourably to his superiors. This was lucky, for just before daybreak, by an arrangement with two carpenters within the walls, the sluices of the Zoom were raised where the river flowed into the town under a tower, and the enemy waded in through the water up to their knees, and seized the corn market. M. du Plessis, who lodged with M. de Fouguerolles, one of the captains, ran thither half-dressed, where he rallied all the men he could. It was God's will by the bravery of some of the captains, that the enemy should be repulsed with the loss of many of their best troops. Humanly speaking, a blunder saved the town, for the invaders meant to have opened the *Porte du Havre* to their cavalry, an easy gate to force, whereas their guides took them by mistake to the *Porte du Vauve* which had a drawbridge and a portcullis, and this upset all their plans. But all this can be read in the history books.

M. du Plessis, partly on account of the promise he had given to the King of Navarre, partly because he believed no good was likely to come of the treaty with the Duke

of Anjou, made up his mind to return to France. He settled his debts to the satisfaction of every one and bade farewell to the Prince of Orange and all his friends. As I was sitting in my carriage by the water's side, waiting to cross the Scheldt by the ferry-boat, M. Junius, burgo-master of Antwerp, accompanied by several of the sheriffs, came to stop me, declaring that they had need of M. du Plessis and really could not let him go. I protested with all my might but in the end they escorted me back and made the same declaration to him. The Prince of Orange wrote from Ghent in the same strain and the Princess, his wife, was also asked to persuade us. It was extremely inconvenient to us after making all our arrangements to leave. Finally, M. du Plessis said he could not consent unless he had permission from his master, the King of Navarre. A messenger was immediately sent to His Majesty who brought back a further leave of absence for six months. When the Duke of Anjou arrived in the Low Countries and learnt what had happened, his dislike of M. du Plessis was redoubled, and so was the jealousy of his advisers, however much they all pretended to the contrary. Nor was this dislike lessened by a message which the Queen of England and her special servants sent to the Estates; to wit: that the Duke's intentions would be judged by the way in which he used M. du Plessis. The result was to make the Duke very friendly to him in public but never to divulge any of his secret plans. It had been agreed that the Duke should have two French counsellors added to the Estates, the choice to lie with the Estates, but, as he was convinced that M. du Plessis would certainly be chosen for one, he preferred to have none at all. The four provinces of Flanders wanted someone to take command and asked to have M. du Plessis appointed. The Duke replied that he could not spare him. People thought from this he was all-powerful whereas in truth he was of very little account and was likely to be of less. For this reason he explained his position to some of his friends, and, so as to

avoid being used as an instrument to deceive the people as well as being blamed undeservedly, he made up his mind to leave the country. The Duke, who was afraid that M. du Plessis' departure might be prejudicial to his schemes put a chance in his way which was as fraudulent as it was complimentary. A proposal came before the Council of State to send a solemn embassy to the Emperor and the Imperial Diet at Augsburg to justify the Estates in their election of a new prince, and to offer homage for the Duchy of Brabant and the other provinces included in the Empire. Whereupon the Duke named the Duke of Bouillon¹ and M. du Plessis as ambassadors, knowing that every one would approve of his choice. The necessary papers and instructions were drawn up, even his speeches were prepared, and yet M. du Plessis was always of opinion that this journey would never be undertaken and that it was only a trick to get him decently out of the country. He was so certain that he could not pretend that he believed in it even to the Duke himself. I have seen him argue over it with his brother, M. de Buhy, who was completely taken in. Lodgings were engaged at Augsburg and his suite arranged. But when M. du Plessis got to Paris, where he had to go for money and for the King's authorization of the mission, Renand, the treasurer, whispered in his ear that the Duke had countermanded all payments to the Duke of Bouillon and himself for their expenses as ambassadors, as well as for the presents which they properly ought to take with them. Thereupon M. du Plessis sent back his dispatches to the Duke and excused himself from the journey.

During the brief time that he stayed at Antwerp after the Duke arrived there he gladly withdrew from all public business, for the reasons which I have mentioned before. He spent his time in translating his book on the Truths of Christianity into latin, which was also printed by Plantin at Leyden. We still have it all in

¹ Guillaume Robert de la Marck, 1564-1588.

his own handwriting. A book printed in Paris treating of the genealogies of Lorraine¹ fell into his hands about this time; on reading it he saw that it had no other object than to prove that the crown of France really belonged to the House of Lorraine. He thereupon made a copy of certain passages, word for word, and sent it to King Henri III. The King thanked him for it, put it carefully by and asked him to write a refutation of it; which he did. The author, one Rosières, archdeacon of Toul, was called before the King's Privy Council and censured. Everybody has seen the consequences of this claim later on.

The first attempt to assassinate the Prince of Orange happened at this time. He was dangerously wounded and was not expected to live. M. du Plessis was constantly with him, and the Prince, thinking he must die, bade him farewell with every sign of friendship and a prayer that he would be a good friend to his children. In spite of all the worries we had in Flanders I will not deny that I was very sorry to leave the country. This was partly because I was afraid of the miserable state of France and partly because I anticipated, and rightly, that I should see less of M. du Plessis than I had done hitherto.

¹ *Stemmata Lotharingiae ac Barri ducum*, by Fr. de Rosières. This book was written to prove the descent of the House of Lorraine from Charlemagne.

CHAPTER VII

AT THE COURT OF NAVARRE

WE left Flanders in July 1582. M. du Plessis no sooner reached Paris than an express came from the King of Navarre bidding him go to Vitray, in Brittany, as his representative at the celebrated General Synod which was then sitting at that town, under the presidency of M. Merlin, a man of rare piety, prudence and sound doctrine. M. du Plessis shared in all the meetings to the satisfaction of the whole company, which did him the honour to consult him on every point that came up for discussion. They even said that if he had come with no official position they would still have begged him to do them the honour to sit with them. The Flemish Churches, through their ministers sent for this special purpose, agreed to unite with the churches in France in the same confession of faith. M. du Plessis proposed certain ways by which the kingdom of Christ might be advanced throughout the realm, which were agreed to. He was then asked if he would undertake to write a book, much needed at this time, in which he should treat of the origin, progress and growth of each and every abuse in the Church ; which book, owing to the wickedness of the times, he has not yet had leisure to begin.

The charge to the Synod which the King of Navarre had given M. du Plessis consisted in two points. The first, that they should elect in every province some person qualified to assist the Council in church matters. The second, that they should choose several ministers, learned and moderate men, to accompany an Embassy which the King intended to send into England, Germany,

Switzerland, etc., to exhort the different countries to meet in a General Synod where the differences between the various faiths could be adjusted by God's word, and thereby a greater unity of aims and objects be obtained. Unknown to M. du Plessis letters were written in the name of the Synod begging the King of Navarre to select him for this embassy. The King did not do so, however, because M. de Segur de Pardaillan, who was at this time very influential with the King, wanted to go himself. From Vitray M. du Plessis went to Gascony, where the King of Navarre was at that time, to give an account of the Synod. Throughout the whole of this journey M. de Buzenval¹ accompanied him, a gentleman of great learning and the rarest quality, and his very good friend. He since managed the King's affairs, both as King of Navarre and afterwards as King of France, very successfully in England and the Low Countries.

I was pregnant at this time and was brought to bed at Plessis with a daughter. She was baptized Anne and her godfather was M. de Buhy, and his wife, Anne d'Anlezy,² my sister-in-law, was her godmother. M. du Plessis had leave to come to Paris for a few days. Just as he was ready to start on his return to Gascony, hastened by several letters from the King of Navarre (for his leave was a very short one), the King of Navarre very pressingly suggested that he should accept the seals of Navarre, adding that he would not be required to don the lawyer's gown, as was often the case in England, Scotland, Poland and other important States, where the seals were frequently held by the great nobles of the country. M. du Plessis excused himself for refusing the King's offer not thinking it wise to change his way of life and his profession.

For some dissatisfaction with M. de Gratemx, the chancellor, the King of Navarre decided to give him as

¹ Paul Choart de Buzenval, diplomat much employed by Henri IV, d. 1607.

² Mlle de Buhy, wife of Pierre de Mornay, M. de Buhy.

a colleague M. Arnoul du Ferrier, a member of the Council, who had lately returned from Venice. M. du Ferrier accepted the post and on his acceptance made public profession of the true religion which he had long professed privately. He declined to do this in the way M. du Plessis wanted him to do as can be seen by his letters on the subject. M. du Plessis maintained that the conversion of M. du Ferrier was not like that of a private person and that he ought to declare publicly, in some well-known church and on a fixed day, his reasons for leaving the Church of Rome at the age of four score, and that he should then send a written statement of his reasons to the Princes and countries where he was known. A natural shyness made M. du Ferrier refuse although he was full of zeal in every other way. It was about this time that an attempt was made to publish the decrees of the Council of Trent. M. du Plessis wrote a remonstrance which was printed and very well received by all good Frenchmen.

About this time the Vicomte de Chaux Navarrois and his brother-in-law, Undiano, arrived in Béarn on behalf of the King of Spain. The King of Navarre, who was at Nerac, sent M. du Plessis to see what they wanted. What their proposals came to was this: that if the King of Navarre would make war on the King of France, the King of Spain would give him 300,000 crowns down and 100,000 a month to defray the cost, and would make no difficulties on the score of religion. The King of Spain warned the King of Navarre that if the guarantee towns were not given up the King of France intended himself to renew the war, while if they were given up the persecutions would begin at once, and that a plot to assassinate the King of Navarre was afoot. The Vicomte further said that if the King of Navarre would change his religion the King of Spain would give him his daughter in marriage and would himself marry the King of Navarre's sister.¹ The reasons for all these mighty fine offers were first the

¹ Catherine de Bourbon, 1558-1604, m. Duc de Bar 1599.

King of Spain's longing for vengeance for all the ill-deeds the French had done in Flanders, and secondly his desire, in his old age, to secure some safe alliance for his son's youth. The King of Navarre would neither listen, nor was he advised to listen, to any of these proposals for it was perfectly plain that their sole object was the ruin of France. And as to the double marriage to follow the King of Navarre's conversion the answer sent to the King of Spain was, that the King of Navarre would give way to him so far as kingly power went, but never in conscience or honour. However, so as to avoid a complete rupture the King of Navarre offered to pledge all the property he had in the Low Countries to the King of Spain for 100,000 crowns, so long as the loan should not carry an obligation to go to war, which might not prove necessary although the times certainly seemed very threatening. The Spanish envoys came back a second time, but failing to induce the King of Navarre to declare war on the King of France, they departed with these words: "You do not know what you are doing, for our merchants are waiting to buy," meaning that if the King of Navarre refused the Guises were ready to treat.

The King of Spain had offered a sum of 30,000 crowns if the King of Navarre would undertake to bring about a reconciliation between him and his subjects in the Low Countries. He also was ready to grant the King of Navarre a safe conduct into Spain and back so that he might explain his wishes by word of mouth, and he was even ready to concede something in the way of religious liberty; and all because of his extreme desire to rid Flanders of the Duke of Alençon. The King of Navarre would have nothing to do with this proposition either and this for several reasons. The Duke of Alençon at this very moment had let himself be persuaded by wicked councillors to make himself master of Antwerp¹ by force, thereby ruining his prospects and his reputation

¹ The "French Fury," 1583. Anjou attempted to seize Antwerp by treachery, but was defeated by the citizens and most of his troops killed.

alike. I have often heard M. du Plessis say, when the betrayal of Antwerp was spoken of in his hearing, that he had never felt a profounder joy than when he heard of the vengeance taken for that deed of treachery. The Prince of Orange confessed that he had often heard M. du Plessis predict what would happen, and that his words had come true in every particular save one; to wit, his good opinion of the Prince's cousin, the Comte de Saint Aignan, who was among the first concerned in the attempt on the city.

At this same time the King of Navarre sent M. de Segur de Pardaillan to Germany, to discuss a union of all protestant religions and an association for its protection by the Queen of England, the King of Denmark and the German Princes. His memoranda and instructions were drawn up by M. du Plessis. This was done mainly because it was clear that those in France, who have since caused such confusion and turmoil, aimed at subverting the State under the pretence of defeating the protestants. M. de Segur was chief of the household business and finances of Navarre, and it was necessary to fill his office during his absence. The King of Navarre appointed M. de Clervant and M. du Plessis, although M. du Plessis protested vigorously, on the grounds that he was a stranger, new to his service, unpractised in finance, and above all of a temper which shrank from displeasing anyone, whereas in a business position of this sort it might be his duty to vex his best friends. At last he accepted it conjointly with M. de Clervant, and I have often heard him say that the companionship of a man of such quality and worth had weighed more than any other circumstance in his acceptance. He was a man of the highest honour, of an illustrious house in Vienne, full of integrity, and they worked together like two brothers. They were both filled with fine plans of re-establishing the House of Navarre in splendour, impoverished as it was by bad management and waste through the troubles, which plans have so far been prevented by the continua-

tion of the misery of the times. The Queen of Navarre at this time began to bargain with the King, her husband, for her return to him, and the King, her brother, was on account of her behaviour by no means anxious to keep her at his Court. Matters, indeed, came to such a pass that in the end King Henri III sent her away, rudely enough, and two leagues out of Paris he had her coaches searched and three of her ladies taken out of them and sent prisoners to the Abbey of Ferrières. There they had to submit to a very close interrogation, even in matters concerning the Queen's honour. The King of Navarre heard all about this while he was at Nerac and he thought it a hard matter to take back his wife after such a public affront. So he decided to send someone to the King, as being the head of the family, to assure him that he would do the Queen no dishonour unless she were herself guilty of dishonour. If she were really guilty he begged the King to punish her, but if she were innocent then he demanded that those who were authors of the slanders should be brought to justice. M. du Plessis was entrusted with this message to the King who was at Lyons and he found it a thorny embassy enough, acting as intermediary between husband and wife and brother and sister in such a ticklish affair. However, the King of Navarre was satisfied and the King (of France) was not offended although M. du Plessis spoke very plainly. There was a good deal of going to and fro between the Kings till things were settled but the whole discussion can be read in M. du Plessis' own notes. The King (of France) took it into his head, after M. du Plessis had delivered his message, to question him upon his religion. M. du Plessis said very frankly that if he had listened to his carnal desires he would have preferred peace and happiness, and if he had listened to his worldly wisdom he would have sought after wealth and honours, and perhaps not unsuccessfully, for he well knew that the party to which he belonged had none of these things to offer ; but he had obeyed his conscience which bade him

hold cheap what he would naturally have valued highly. His Majesty took it in good part and praised him for his sentiments. A warning reached the King of Navarre whilst M. du Plessis was absent that there was a plot to attack him on the highway, and so the King sent a courier, post-haste, to bid him be on his guard. And in truth he ran into great danger between Paris and Lyons from an attempt made on his life by some of the Queen of Navarre's special friends. But God had him in His care. I went to join him in Paris where he only stayed one day. Although I was very near my time I took him in my coach as far as Orleans, whence he took the road to Limoges. I believe this journey over paved roads did me harm, because some time later I was delivered at Rouen of twin sons, both still-born. I ran the greatest danger of my life and was in the deepest trouble because M. du Plessis could not be with me. I was so sure of death that I made my testament. My chief aim in so doing was to put into it my confession of faith, leaving all other things for M. du Plessis to settle according to his own wishes. But I also wrote him a letter to bid him farewell and to beg him to care for our children. I wrote it all with my own hand, as can be seen among our papers, and I never thought I should have the happiness to see him again. God helped me through all, using as His instrument M. de l'Aigle, one of the foremost men in the medical profession.

At the beginning of the year 1584 another occasion arose for sending M. du Plessis into France,¹ for all this long time I only saw him now and again by chance, and then often at great risk to himself because the times were so very evil. Information more than once reached the King of Navarre on the plots of the King of Spain and the Duke of Savoy² against France by means of the House of Lorraine. At one time a certain Captain Beauregard

¹ Mlle du Plessis here uses the word 'France' to signify the country north of the Loire.

² Charles Emanuel succeeded his father 1580, d. 1530.

came to him with an account of all the enterprises in which the Duke of Savoy had employed him in Dauphiné and Provence, and in particular he told him about a great design to seize Arles, which a Captain Espiard had undertaken. Another time he was told of the plans made to seize Orleans and Chalons sur Saône. From Spain he learnt what were the pensions that the King of that country was scattering about France, and finally news reached him from someone in the Viceroy of Valencia's household that war with France was to be declared. These last items of news recalled what the Spanish envoys had said on leaving, "That their merchants were waiting and ready." So he sent for M. de Châtillon and M. du Plessis, just these two and no others, to discuss the whole matter with him. They were all agreed that they must not let France be lost and that an effort must be made to convince the King (of France) where his duty lay.¹ So M. du Plessis was dispatched to the King to place all the facts before him so that he might do what was right and proper. M. du Plessis travelled post and on the way fell in with M. de Lausac, the King of Spain's chief agent in France. M. de Lausac has since confessed that he was very near doing him an ill-turn. When M. du Plessis reached his journey's end the King listened to him privately and very patiently. He prefaced his statement by saying that he knew that information coming from huguenot sources would be suspect, but he implored the King to believe that a man might be both a good huguenot and a good Frenchman. The King was certainly much moved by these disclosures, even to saying that M. du Plessis was the first person who had given him any insight as to what was really happening in the kingdom. He did, in fact, send out orders in a thousand directions in an attempt to remedy things; he seized the siege material prepared for the attack on Arles; changed the governor of Briançon in Dauphiné; and

¹ Philip II, of Spain, signed a treaty with the leaders of the League in Dec. 1584.

imagined that he had provided for the safety of Orleans and other places. He even did M. du Plessis the honour to consult him on the right measures to take in matters of such moment. Whereupon M. du Plessis had the boldness to reply that in former times Marshals of France had been arrested who had had less chance to do mischief and who deserved it less than those of the house of Lorraine. But he had small hope of any good coming from his mission because the King told him to repeat all that he had said to the Queen mother, and when he demurred the King himself took him to her. The Duke of Alençon also arrived at Court and the King talked to him too, and finally all the King's dispatches were drawn up by M. de Villeroi,¹ the Secretary of State. Of course, everything came to the ears of M. de Guise, who was at Court, and who immediately sent his own hired assassin, Captain Johannes, to lodge at the sign of the Bitted Gosling, rue de Bussy, opposite M. du Plessis' lodging, with orders to catch him going in or out. A warning reached M. du Plessis, and so, furnished with a passport from the King, he left Paris by way of Montargis, thence to Gien and so by water to Tours, and thus reached Gascony in safety. In consideration of the service he had done him the King offered him a hundred thousand francs. M. du Plessis refused the offer, although he might very properly have taken a present from his King had he not been afraid it would stir up ill will. Instead of this gift to himself he begged the King to recompense the King of Navarre, his master, whereupon the King granted him fifty thousand crowns, payable from the salt dues of Pecaiz, and out of this grant the King of Navarre made M. du Plessis a present of 500 crowns. His Majesty (Henri III), tried his hardest to make M. du Plessis say that M. de Montmorenci had a share in all these plots, but M. du Plessis steadily denied

¹ Nicholas de Neufville, Seigneur de Villeroi, Secretary of State ; joined the League, but after Henri III's death attached himself to Henri IV, 1542-1617.

it. Another result of this mission was to make the King think more kindly of M. de Châtillon.

It was during this journey to Paris that M. de Buhy and M. du Plessis divided their paternal inheritance. They set a very notable example of brotherly concord for they both submitted to their mother's decision, and, although it was not easy for several reasons, the business was successfully settled without recourse to a notary. It was just at this time that I began to write these memoirs.

The movements of the House of Lorraine, the near approach of the date on which the guarantee towns ought to be given up, M. d'Alençon's perpetual desire for something new, and other such reasons, convinced M. du Plessis that France could not long remain at peace. So, as he longed for us to be as much together as the misery of the age allowed, he decided that I must come to Gascony. We settled our private affairs as best we could so that I could follow him as soon as I was ready. He wanted me to bring our son with us because the boy ought not to lose time and also because it was better for him to be out of the reach of enemies. I had all the work in the world to get him away from his grandmother, Mlle de Buhy. I had never been afraid to follow M. du Plessis to England, to Flanders or anywhere else, but now the thought of Gascony filled me with horror. I would gladly have given up going because of a vision I had had ten years before this, and two years before we were married, and which now constantly returned to my mind. The vision was this, that the Kingdom would be split up and that to save myself from the disaster I fled to Gascony, which was a thing I should never have thought of doing at that date. I started with a small train and while on the road I heard of the Duke of Alençon's death. When I reached Sainte Foi, M. du Plessis came to meet me and escort me to Montauban, the town he had chosen for my usual place of residence. He was influenced in his choice by the fact that a General Assembly of the Churches was being held there, by the

King's permission, to discuss what could be done to secure peace and what reply should be made to the King's demand by the mouth of M. de Belière, His Majesty's Councillor of State, for the surrender of the guarantee towns.

In this Assembly, which included the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, M. de Laval, M. de Turenne, M. de Châtillon and many lords, gentlemen and persons nominated by all the Churches throughout the kingdom, a petition to the King was drawn up. In it His Majesty was humbly implored to correct the manifold ways in which his Edicts of Pacification were either ignored or contravened whether in matters of religion, justice or of the promised securities and pledges. M. du Plessis was unanimously elected to draw up this petition in accordance with the instructions of the provinces represented in the Assembly. It was also resolved to ask His Majesty to leave the guarantee towns in the hands of the protestants for several years longer, and for the same reasons that they were conceded in the first instance, to wit: the bitter ill-feeling and distrust arising from the non-execution of the aforesaid Edicts. The Assembly also unanimously selected M. de Laval and M. du Plessis to carry this petition as well as their many complaints and requests to His Majesty. M. du Plessis declined on the grounds that he could not be spared from the management of the King of Navarre's household and also that his own family had only just arrived in a town which was entirely strange to them. In spite of this the King of Navarre declared that go he must, and all the more because M. de Laval said he would not go unless M. du Plessis went too. In truth this journey was very hard for me to bear after coming so far in the hope of securing a little comfort in life. But the public good must come first. After the King (of France) had spent several days discussing the petition with the Chancellor, M. de Birague, and Messrs Villequier¹ and Belière, by God's

¹ René de Villequier, Baron de Clairvaux, favourite of Henri III.

grace he gave his assent to the greater part of the requests expressed in it so far as they concerned religion ; certain regulations in the *Chambres de Justice*¹ were also made, in agreement with the Presidents of the Court, after a two-days' conference between Messrs de Laval and du Plessis and the King's representatives in the *Chambre St Louis* ; but the greatest concession of all, after a flat refusal at first, was the King's consent that the protestants should keep the guarantee towns in their hands for two years longer. By this concession those of the religion could plead a justification of their conduct when the League started a fresh war soon after, because otherwise the Leaguers would have had an excellent pretext in the fact that the guarantee towns had not been surrendered. All the papers relating to this affair are still in our hands.

It is worth remarking that when M. du Plessis went to bid the Cardinal de Bourbon farewell, the Cardinal closely questioned him on what the King had said, and that when M. du Plessis told him that the towns were not to be given up for two years he looked greatly taken aback, thereby showing his ill will. Nor did the Cardinal's other actions contradict the impression he then gave, although only a few days previously he had bade M. du Plessis to assure the King of Navarre that as he had the honour to be his uncle he should always be his very good servant, and recognize him as the Head of his House. On his return M. du Plessis very plainly told the King of Navarre what he thought of the Cardinal. During the five months which M. du Plessis spent at the French Court the King often asked him what he heard about the Guises and their plots, about which he could tell him plenty, and His Majesty sometimes sent for him to come alone and see him privately on this matter. This annoyed M. du Plessis because he was afraid that M. de Laval would be jealous. However, this was no bar to their becoming such friends over this negotiation that

¹ Local temporary courts of inquiry into irregularities in the finances of various provinces.

when, some time later, M. de Laval died, the King of Navarre would not let the news be sent to M. du Plessis, knowing how great his sorrow would be. Indeed, when the sad news did reach him he nearly fell ill with grief. He has never failed to show his affection to M. de Laval's children, as he had promised their father.

The death of the Duke of Alençon set people a-thinking. The King of Navarre, in the belief that the Queen Mother would be glad of his support should any changes (in the succession to the throne) be attempted, sent M. du Plessis to her with an offer of his services. Her daughter, the Queen of Navarre, who at this date was on good terms with her husband, also wrote to her but the Queen Mother sent back such a chilly reply that the King of Navarre, after thinking the matter over very carefully, came to the conclusion that she had already taken sides with the House of Lorraine and the late Cardinal de Bourbon. That she had done so became very apparent a few months later on.

CHAPTER VIII

CHURCH DISCIPLINE AT MONTAUBAN

Mlle du Plessis¹ set out on the 2nd of June 1584 (from the north of France) to join M. du Plessis, who on account of the position he held in the King of Navarre's household could ill be spared from his master's side. On hearing of her arrival at Sainte Foi, M. du Plessis came to meet her. As on the one hand the King of Navarre had not decided where to establish his principal residence, while on the other he had given permission for the deputies from the churches to meet at Montauban on the 20th August, M. du Plessis made up his mind to bring his family to this town so that his wife might have the pleasure of being near him during the Assembly. Afterwards they could move to whatever place in which the King might choose to pass the winter. After M. du Plessis had escorted his family to Montauban he rejoined the King at Pamiers. Mlle du Plessis made no change in her way of living whilst she was at Montauban, neither in food, nor dress nor coiffure, behaving exactly as she had done for the past fifteen years during which she had had the happiness of being accepted by several of the largest and best churches in Christendom, notably in Sedan, Germany, England, the Low Countries and France. Everywhere, to God be the glory, many people of worth can testify to the modesty with which she conducted herself. M. du Plessis returned to Montauban with the King for the Assembly; there are many deputies from most of the churches in France who can bear witness that Mlle du Plessis neither in dress nor in behaviour showed vanity or cause for scandal.

¹ The following chapter was written by Mlle du Plessis but is not included in the Memoir. She wrote it in the third person.



COURT LADIES IN THE REIGN OF HENRI III



Whilst he stayed in Montauban M. du Plessis sometimes asked M. Berault, the minister of the town, to come and see him and to eat and to drink with him, and M. Berault had plenty of opportunities, whilst they conversed together, to acquaint M. du Plessis with the schism which had arisen in his church. But as the schism was of his own contriving he naturally sought for no remedy. Mlle du Plessis found that several very well-behaved families in the town were cut off from court because their womenfolk wore no false hair, although they protested against the way in which M. Berault interpreted a decree of the synod in a different way to what was the rule in all the other churches; she also found other families who were publicly preached against because their members would not take an oath that their daughters should never wear wigs nor nets of gold thread, whence arose tumults and riots in the town. All the ladies of these various families were most anxious to settle how they were to dress their hair while M. du Plessis was still at Montauban. Sacrament Sunday drawing nigh M. Berault came to the house where Mlle du Plessis lodged about ten days beforehand, bringing with him the sacrament tokens for the 'Ten'¹ of the ward; Mlle du Plessis thereupon asked M. du Plessis to request M. Berault to give tokens for all of her household who were entitled to partake the Lord's Supper, a thing which she would never have done if she had not been willing to submit to the discipline of the church at Montauban, provided always that she was duly notified of the regulations. She very well knew without being told by M. Berault, that she could have applied to the court minister had it not been her wish to do everything possible for edification and friendliness. When M. du Plessis sent one of his men with a list of all his household who were eligible to join the Communion, accompanied with a request for tokens for them, M. Berault replied that he

¹ Officials whose business it was to distribute the tokens to communicants.

had enough to do with looking after his own flock without undertaking any further charge. He gave no other reason nor did he try to see M. du Plessis although he lodged in the same house and there was nothing but a gallery to traverse between the room in which he sat and M. du Plessis' bedchamber. He could have seen him and told him why he sent such a vague answer or what he really wanted the du Plessis family to do, and he would have received every satisfaction. After such a reply M. and Mlle du Plessis decided that M. Berault required no change to be made in her attire but that he would prefer that they should apply to the court minister so that no prejudice should be done to the observances which he demanded from his own congregation. This being so Mlle du Plessis thought no more of making any alteration in her accustomed coiffure. Some days after, as Mlle du Plessis was leaving her lodging at the hour of morning service on her way to present a child for baptism along with M. de Châtillon, several members of the Montauban consistory met her at her door, saying that they had been waiting a long time for her. She answered that they had done wrong to do so for they knew that M. du Plessis' door always stood open to all worthy men. They said that they had been bidden to wait by the consistory so that M. du Plessis might not hear what they had to say to her. She replied that she would find it hard to keep anything from her husband, to whom she told even her thoughts so far as lay in her power, and knowing who M. du Plessis was she thought their behaviour passing strange. To be brief they told her what they had been sent to say, to wit, that she must discard her false hair. She said that it was curious that since they would not admit M. du Plessis' household among their flock that they should expect her to recognize them as her pastors. Moreover, in regard to their request she must refer them to M. du Plessis and she would abide by his decision.

Shortly after this a special consistory was held to consider the schism which had existed at Montauban

for four years past. It was composed of the town consistory to which was added the court consistory and certain well-known ministers of other churches. After a discussion on several families in the town the trouble with the du Plessis family was mentioned, although neither M. nor Mlle du Plessis had expressed any desire that their affairs should be brought before the meeting. The meeting was of opinion that, having regard to the modest behaviour of the whole family in dress and general behaviour and, moreover, M. du Plessis' manner of living being very well known to every one, no change in their costume should be required. This decision was influenced by the well-known spitefulness of court gossip, whose criticisms they could not escape, as well as by the fact that Mlle du Plessis was not a citizen of Montauban and was therefore not amenable to its regulations. This being decided, M. Cahier, the court minister, was asked to give them their tokens. Passing M. du Plessis' lodging he came in and only finding Mlle du Plessis at home he told her that he should have their tokens ready whenever M. du Plessis liked to send for them. Soon afterwards, however, M. Cahier was forbidden by the Montauban consistory or rather by some of its members to give tokens to M. du Plessis either for himself or any of his family. It seemed a strange proceeding, considering how the matter had been discussed in such a worthy and notable company, that its decision should be contradicted by a few private persons. However, when M. du Plessis sent for his tokens M. Cahier came to excuse himself for not doing as he had been told to do, and thereupon the news ran all round the town and the court that M. du Plessis and all his family had been excommunicated without a word of explanation. It was an aggravation that several nobles and people of quality of the other religion were at court at the time. The result was that on Saturday morning when M. du Plessis went to the King's levee every one began to laugh at him, and some even took it as an occasion to abuse our religion and our

ministers which really did annoy him. Mlle du Plessis went to the sermon and on her return two elders of the court consistory escorted her home. As she was conversing with them in her chamber Messrs Berault and Bironier, both ministers of Montauban, came in. M. Berault began by making his excuses for coming so seldom to see M. du Plessis, adding that his reason for not doing so was that he knew how busy M. du Plessis was whilst the Assembly sat. Mlle du Plessis replied that her husband had certainly been very much occupied but in spite of that, other people had been to see him ; she knew, she said, that M. Berault had not really come to excuse himself and she might tell him plainly that M. du Plessis had not been so angry for a long time past as he was at the present moment. M. du Plessis had brought his family to Montauban to give them peace and quiet but they got nothing of the sort. Instead of having the happiness of serving as a means of edification as they had done for the last nine years, in whatever country they had lived, here, in Montauban, they had had the unhappiness of being nothing but a cause of scandal ; M. du Plessis thought it passing strange that he and all his family should be excommunicated without a word ; and finally that it was neither in accordance with the law of charity nor the commands of God to punish a wrongdoer before admonishing him. Thereupon M. Berault told her that he had come from the consistory to make her understand that she must leave off her false hair. She begged him to allow M. de Roupeyroux, and other members of the court consistory present to bear witness to what he said to her and she to him. He told her that he had no authority to do this and she persisting and calling on M. de Roupeyroux, M. Berault pressed the matter no more and rose to go. Mlle du Plessis said to him, " Sir, you should have spoken to M. du Plessis who is the head of this family." And so Messrs Berault and Bironier departed and an hour later the consistory of Montauban and that of the court met with

the others who had sat in the previous meeting and it was immediately decided that tokens should be given to M. du Plessis for himself and his family. And since tokens had been granted it was also agreed that the family should be granted their due place. M. Berault and the whole consistory of Montauban came to see M. du Plessis who thereupon complained of their behaviour to him ; saying that " he thought it strange they should refuse him the sacrament without saying a word to him first. Indeed he thought their whole behaviour to his family strange ; his house stood open at all times to worthy people and they had all had opportunities to speak with him. Instead of doing so M. Berault had spoken to his wife in the open street as she came away from the sermon, admitting that he had purposely chosen this way of approaching her so that her husband might know nothing about it, which was a very unseemly and ill-considered proceeding. And then without a word further tokens had been refused to his whole family men as well as women, although thanks be to God, not one of them but was fully instructed in religion ; further, that when the consistory attached to the King's household had decided to admit his family to the sacrament, he, M. Berault, had forbidden M. Cahier to give them tokens. And so, before he, M. du Plessis, had heard a word from him all the court and the town were laughing at him, and his wife and household were debarred from the Lord's Supper to the great scandal of many worthy people and the great amusement of others of the contrary religion of all sorts who chanced to be in Montauban. Moreover, as the Assembly lately held in the town was on the eve of scattering the scandal would be carried all over France, all the more because his name was tolerably well known by God's grace. He consoled himself with the knowledge that his own and his family's mode of life was well known and he hoped the blame of the scandal would fall on others and not on himself. All the same he greatly regretted to see the minister and

consistory of a well-known church involved in the blame." (Then he set forth his reason for bringing his family to Montauban that they might find peace, the welcome they had received in all other churches, the well-known propriety of their conduct, and although they had never changed their mode of life the happiness they had had to be an example wherever they were living.¹) "If Montauban," he continued, "was treated as the only Church it would be a repetition of the error of the Donatists. It had no claim to a separate discipline but should conform to the rest of the churches in France, and it was for M. Berault to bend his opinion to the decision of the national synod, of which he could not pretend ignorance, and not to hug himself in his own obstinate peculiarities against the advice of so many pious and sound members of the church at that time gathered together at Montauban. These had all condemned his behaviour, particularly in the case of himself, his wife and his family. He would always govern his household according to the rules laid down by the churches but not by those of the church of Montauban if it thought itself above the others." He spoke to them in all kindness, but it hit him hard to be thus dragged into publicity and he told them plainly that he should have been ashamed to make such a fuss over a matter of indifference. A notorious schism had already arisen in M. Berault's church and what was worse, legal proceedings for damages had resulted, and, to the scandal of the church, and the hazarding of the whole system of ecclesiastical discipline, the case was to be heard in the court of the *Parlement* of Toulouse on the first possible day. He repeated again and again that for the true edification of the church complaints should not be made about hair if the head under it were safe. "And M. Berault must not fancy that he was the only Christian, the only pastor or the only wise man. . . ." And after this harangue M. Berault retired, making small answer.

¹ This passage is abridged as it is mainly repetition of previous statements on the subject.

At the close of the Assembly the churches begged the King of Navarre to allow M. du Plessis to accompany M. de Laval to lay their grievances before the King. The King of Navarre demurred on account of M. du Plessis' position in his household, but being pressed he yielded the point. M. du Plessis would gladly have been spared this journey for he was not well and needed leisure to attend to his health. He had worked very hard all through the Assembly; his family had come south in the hot weather and he had meant to ask for a month or six weeks' leave to look about for a suitable place to settle in for the winter. But without regard to his wishes the journey was decided on. He left Mlle du Plessis ill with a severe chill which kept her in bed for a fortnight before his departure. Smallpox had just begun to show in two of his little children which filled him with the greatest alarm, for one of his lacqueys had died of it a week before. At length recommending his family to God's care he set out for Blois. Whilst he was away Mlle du Plessis hardly stirred from bed or her room and kept her head so muffled up that her hair could give no scandal. If she did venture out one day to hear a sermon she spent the following eight in bed. But in spite of the trouble she was in both on account of M. du Plessis' absence and of her own and her children's illnesses not one of the three ministers of Montauban came to see her, although she purposely complained of their neglect in such a way that they should hear of it.

A month before the Christmas Communion, as the custom is, a catechism was held in each town ward, when all those who were about to partake the Lord's Supper were catechized and their medals given them at the close of the meeting. M. Berault came to the house where Mlle du Plessis lodged to hold a catechism. Hearing this Mlle du Plessis, although still ill, rose from her bed so that her household might share in the benefits of the instruction and came into the hall where some fifty or sixty persons were already assembled, these being all

those eligible in the ward. She wore her night-cap and her head was covered up with a black kerchief; her family were all dressed very soberly; she went in with her children, her women and her men-servants and yet M. Berault turned them all out. It appeared that he did this, as she heard afterwards, because of the complaint she had made to the first consistory. But he turned her men-servants out as well as the women, although the rules about hair could not have applied to them; and her whole household were greatly annoyed because of the scandal it gave to the assembled company. In consequence of this action on the part of M. Berault Mlle du Plessis wrote the following remonstrance to the consistory with her own hand:

"The members of the consistory are informed that on Friday last the members of the town ward were assembled at the house of Mlle de Bonencontre, our hostess, to share in the customary catechism. And as wherever there is a church and an assembly of the faithful our family ought to be present as members of the body of the church whereof Jesus Christ is the head, I rose from my bed, ill though I was, and came to the place where the catechism was being held, together with our whole family, men and women, all of whom were members of our religion and communicants of the Holy Sacrament. This I did for the following reasons: First, to claim our membership in the church of Christ: secondly, to receive instruction; thirdly, with God's assistance, to serve for edification among those gathered together.

"I know not why I was afflicted with the unhappiness of seeing all my family, men as well as women, turned away by M. Berault, who, for fear he might have to admit them to the Lord's Supper, interrupted his discourse as soon as he thought he recognized members of M. du Plessis' household. Those that he was doubtful about he left, but the rest were turned away, so that I was deprived of the good I was entitled to get from the meeting in two points. First, because M. du Plessis'

household, for which I am responsible in his absence, was turned away without knowing why (which I maintain M. Berault had no right to do because not having received us into the Church of God he cannot cast us out of it), and secondly, because instead of edifying the assembly, as we hoped, we were made a cause for scandal. I therefore beg the consistory to read my confession of faith which I have written down and which I hold in my heart and confess with my mouth; and I beg them to judge whether there is anything which contravenes the faith of all Christian churches. I also beg to know whether they have heard anything to the discredit of M. du Plessis or myself or any of our household; and finally whether they can or ought to debar us and our household from an assembly of the faithful or from the Holy Sacrament.

“As M. du Plessis has been deeply offended by M. Berault, in the persons of myself and our household, during his absence, in as much as we were all turned away from the meeting held for the catechizing, I hereby cite M. Berault to submit to the judgment of the consistory which I ask them to give on the above-mentioned facts. I urge this all the more strongly because I find more of temper and ill will than of brotherly love in his conduct. Moreover, over this question of false hair I see quarrels arise and flourish in this church to the great scandal of all men, caused solely by the fact that M. Berault has not understood, or has not correctly reported the decision reached by the General Synod on the wearing of *quin-quelets*, which he takes to mean the use of brass wire in the hair. This was not the meaning attached to the term by the synod, which is proved by the difference between the reports of all the other churches present. This difference between them and the church here would seem like an attempt at assuming absolute authority and power (on the part of this church) regardless of the law of charity. I would ask the Assembly to read what M. Calvin says in his comment of the passage in the letter

of St Paul to Timothy in which this matter is discussed. M. Calvin declares in his comment that the Apostle had in mind a reformation of manners rather than of clothes and was not troubling himself over little things. Moreover he takes all power from the ministers and leaves it to the magistrates.

“At the same time I declare that I have no wish to go against the discipline as settled by the whole body of churches in France, whose object is to honour God and set a good example to our neighbour. I therefore call on the consistory to judge whether they have ever seen any immodesty in my clothes or in my manners or in those of my household, such as would authorize our exclusion from the church and the sacraments. And for the reason I have given above I decline to admit M. Berault to be my judge.”

Here follows the confession of faith which Mlle du Plessis laid before the consistory.

“I believe in one God and one Essence,¹ all wise, all good, all just, all powerful, who made heaven and earth, who is manifest to us in the old and new testaments. I believe that there are three Persons and one essence: the Father who is the beginning and origin of all things: the Son who is the eternal wisdom: the Holy Ghost who is eternal virtue and power proceeding from the Father and the Son: three Persons not confounded but distinct, not divided but of one essence, one eternity, one omnipotence.

“I believe that God in three persons by His power, wisdom and goodness created heaven and earth and all that in them is; also that, according to His word He governs all things and has a peculiar care of His children whom He cherishes for Jesus Christ His Son's sake.

“I believe that the first man, whom God created in His own image, fell from grace by disobedience and sin and is wholly cut off from God. I believe that all the offspring of Adam are partakers in his sin so that we can only return to God through grace. For our spirit is blind, our hearts are depraved and our wills perverted, but God, out of His loving kindness, saves those whom He has chosen from the general corruption and damnation of all mankind, through the eternal wisdom of Jesus Christ His Son, without consideration of works and solely through His mercy.

¹ *Essence*, not Substance, was used in the French confession of faith.

“I believe that all we need for salvation is given us through Jesus Christ : that He, being the wisdom of God and His eternal Son, took on our flesh to be both God and man, like unto us save only for sin ; that by the eternal virtue of the Spirit He was conceived in the Virgin’s womb of the seed of David according to the flesh ; that in His person two natures are joined together and yet, notwithstanding, the divine nature remains, uncreated, infinite and all pervading while the human nature remains finite, created with form, measure and attributes ; and although Jesus Christ in His resurrection endowed His body with immortality yet its nature was not thereby altered.

“I believe that God, by sending His Son, chose to show us His inestimable loving kindness by delivering Himself over to death for our sins and rising again from the dead for our justification : and that by the single sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ upon the cross we are reconciled to Him and become acceptable to Him, so that in Jesus Christ we have wisdom, righteousness, justification and redemption by His death upon the cross. We have entire satisfaction and all our righteousness is founded on the free remission of our sins. It is this which gives us liberty to call on God through Jesus Christ, His Son and our mediator, in full confidence that God is our Father.

“I believe that the righteousness of Christ is given to us through faith, which illuminates us by the secret working of the Holy Spirit, so that it is a gift and a peculiar grace given by God to those whom Jesus Christ accepts. By this faith we are born again into a new life, for by nature we are subjected to sin. Through it we are filled with the desire to obey and serve God according to His will, as made known to us by His word, to which nothing should be added, nor anything taken away. I believe that God gave His law unto Moses as the sole rule for the worship, love and reverence which we owe to God as well as for the duty and love which we owe to all men who are our neighbours. I believe that Jesus Christ is our sole advocate and mediator and that in His name we can boldly pray to God and ask Him for all things needful, even as He taught us to call on God the Father in His name saying, ‘Our Father which art in Heaven’. I believe that all our prayers should be likened unto this.

“I believe that all the faithful ought to watch over and maintain the unity of the Church, and that wherever there is a gathering in God’s name each one should join it ; those who keep aloof separate themselves from the union of Christ. I believe that the Church is the whole company of the faithful who bind themselves to keep God’s Word as written in the Old and New Testaments ;

who strive to live in the fear of God and profit by it day by day ; that the Church administers the Holy Sacraments as ordained by God for the confirmation of our faith and the strengthening of our weakness ; which sacraments are outward and visible signs of God's care by means of His Holy Spirit, which never speaks to us in them in vain. At the same time their substance and reality are founded in Christ and apart from Him they are but vain shadows.

" I believe that there are two sacraments ordained of God and established and in use in the Church ; baptism, which is a sign of our adoption and acceptance into the body of Jesus Christ, so as to be washed and cleansed by His blood and renewed in holiness of life by the Holy Spirit. And the Lord's Supper, which signifies not only that Jesus Christ died and rose again for us but that He verily nourishes us with His body and blood, so that we may be one with Him and live in Him and thus, through the secret virtue of the Holy Ghost, He may nourish and quicken us spiritually with the substance of His body and blood. Which things can be understood only by faith. Albeit I believe that God gives us in baptism and in the Lord's Supper, in very truth and deed, those things which He signifies in them.

" I believe that every believer, before he comes to the Lord's table, should examine himself, search out his faith, and repent of his sins with a desire to amend his evil life and to be in charity with his neighbour. I believe that the rule and discipline as established by our Lord should be observed in the Church : which is that there should be pastors and men of sober life in charge of the Church so that pure doctrine may flourish, vice be repressed and punished and the poor and others be comforted. I believe that all true pastors, wherever they be, have an equal power, that no church can claim to dominate any other, that all are under one sovereign lord and one universal bishop, our Lord Jesus Christ. In the matter of kings, and of princes and magistrates set over us by kings, I believe we should obey them, provided that their commands are in no ways contrary to our duty to God and the love we owe to our neighbour, for in such matters God must be obeyed before men.

" I believe that in the Church all things indifferent should be governed by the rule of charity, and that in the observance of regulations, which have not yet been received as part of the discipline of the Church, censure and excommunication should be charily used, since everything in the Church should tend to the glory of God and the edification of our neighbour. Those to whom God has given abundantly of His grace ought to give an

example of charity in sustaining the feeble, recognizing that we should never confound our neighbour for whom Christ died. Those who join the company of the faithful for the purpose of receiving instruction and confirmation of their faith should never be turned away. If after confessing their faith they are not found in error, and if there is no evidence of scandal against them, but on the contrary they are found to be of modest behaviour, they should be admitted to the Sacrament. To act otherwise lightly and with obstinacy is mere tyranny in the Church.

“I believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification and is ascended into Heaven in our name to open its doors to us and to be our Intercessor and Advocate. I believe He will return to judge the quick and the dead in like manner as he was seen to ascend. I believe that Jesus Christ will not come except to save His elect so that I have full assurance of salvation since my advocate is my judge, and hence I believe that I shall be filled with a felicity which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived.

“This is the substance of my faith in the which I pray God, for Jesus Christ’s sake and by virtue of the Holy Ghost, I may live and die and hold fast to the last breath of my body and the last drop of my blood.”

The above testimony of faith was sent to the consistory and read aloud to the whole company. M. Bironier, the minister, and M. le Clerc, an elder, were deputed to go to Mlle du Plessis’ lodgings and assure her that her faith had never been called in question, but that she would not be admitted to the Lord’s Supper unless she discarded her wig. She begged them to pronounce a judgment on what she had written and had required of them. A week passed and then another at the end of which Mlle du Plessis wrote again begging to know whether she would be admitted to the sacrament. M. Bironier and another elder were once more sent to her to declare that she could not be admitted wearing a wig but as for her men-servants they might present themselves for catechism and be admitted. Without a moment’s delay she wrote the following paper and sent it to the consistory.

“Upon the declaration of the members of the con-

sistory that they cannot admit me until I have discarded my wig I ask them to point out the article in which the disuse of false hair is ordered by the National Synod, offering to submit so soon as they show me the rule as laid down and particularized. Otherwise I must inform them that at the last sacrament, when a great number of ministers were assembled at Montauban, it was agreed that I was to be admitted in my usual attire, on the grounds that neither in my hair nor my dress did I show any immodesty. Now that M. du Plessis is away, as every one knows, on the service of the churches, I cannot alter my mode of dress without his knowledge and approval. If, however, they persist during his absence in refusing me admittance to the sacrament I hereby declare that I shall appeal to the National Synod."

A week later Mlle du Plessis seeing the sacrament drawing near decided to send a declaration to the consistory. M. Berault presided at it. His reply was that he could receive no more communications in writing but that if she had something to say to them she must come before them in person. Directly she knew their wishes she appeared before them and read aloud the following paper, which was the same as she had already sent to them.

"In consequence of the message sent to me last Wednesday by the members of the consistory that I should not be admitted to communion unless I removed my hair, or rather the brass wire which is in it, I make the following demand, viz., that I should be shown the express article, as determined and put into writing by the National Synod, in which this matter is particularized and set out so that I may have the pleasure of obeying it, declaring once again that if you can show me this article I shall immediately conform to it in accordance with my desire to submit myself to the Church's discipline. And I beg the whole company of the consistory and each member of it in particular, in God's name and in the name of the charity we all owe to one another to show me this article on which some of you formed your action

and which is so far unknown to me. In default of showing it to me I plead M. du Plessis' absence, now away on the service of the churches, without whose commands I am not at liberty to make a change in my attire. For the whole question was discussed and settled by him at the last Sacrament day and I was admitted to communion by the advice of many worthy men. I beg to remind the members of the consistory of the duty wives owe to their husbands to whom, by God's express commandment, their will is subjected. And also how Saint Peter expounds in the third chapter of his first epistle what that duty is. You cite this chapter against braiding the hair while all the time, gentlemen, you cannot be ignorant, as plainly appears in the text, that the chief aim of the apostle is to admonish wives to be submissive to their husbands, even infidel husbands. All the more am I bound to obedience seeing that M. du Plessis professes the same faith as we all do, and, moreover, is endowed with many gifts which he employs daily in the service of the churches. And since, notwithstanding my request to be shown the above-mentioned article of the National Synod, and regardless of my petition to wait until M. du Plessis makes his will known you persist in excluding me from the Lord's Supper, I do hereby declare that I appeal to the National Synod, and you are bound to admit me as an appellant (pending the decision of the National Synod). I must request you to say without delay whether, having regard to my appeal, you intend to let the whole procedure remain in suspension until such time as the National Synod shall declare its will, and in the meantime whether you will receive me and my whole family to communion, to this end catechizing us and giving us our tokens. For there can be no disobedience in me where no command has been given. But should I have the unhappiness to have my just plea refused by you and if, ignoring my appeal, you exclude me from your communion I solemnly tell you I shall be deeply grieved and most miserable. I shall suffer in

patience as a chastisement sent me by God to try me, who perchance makes use of me to bring order out of disorder.

“I declare to you that by God’s grace I hope to go where I can share in the Lord’s Supper and partake of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in a church and in the company of the faithful where God is worshipped and our neighbour is edified. Nevertheless, I do not forget the commandment given us, ‘therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee. Leave there thy gift before the altar . . . and first be reconciled with thy brother.’ Therefore, for fear lest some of you should misinterpret my behaviour as resulting either from disobedience or from loving vanity more than communion with our Lord Jesus Christ and thereby entertain a bad opinion of me, I protest before God, to whom I appeal as my witness, that I hold the dressing of my hair an indifferent matter. If I believed as do some that this command is of God I should not hesitate to obey nor await a decision by the National Synod. But on account of the dissensions which have arisen in this church I have most carefully searched the Scriptures all through and have found no clear commandment on the matter and, beyond the holy advice of Paul to Timothy on braided tresses and gold and pearls or costly array and that of St Peter on the plaiting of hair and wearing adornments of gold and the putting on of apparel, I have found no mention in Holy Writ of discarding hair except where gold, pearls and other articles of dress are also included. And yet a fortnight ago M. Berault preached that gold and precious stones were created by God and were matters of indifference, whose use for adornment was permissible provided that a proper regard for rank, station in life and calling was observed. This confirms me in my opinion that hair is also indifferent considering that there is no mention in the Scriptures of wearing gilt wire, which is the real point of dispute and cause of schism in this church.

“It is a very mischievous thing for human counsel, however good and holy, to be put in the place of God’s commandments as has been too much done by the Roman Church. This is indeed my chief reason for wishing that this dispute should be settled for the sake of peace and quiet in the churches. Because if, as you affirm, the commandment is of God, not only the church of Montauban, but all the other churches as well should obey it, and will grievously sin if they fail in its observance. On the other hand if it is an indifferent matter the pastor may admonish and reprove for edification but I do not believe that particular churches can, on their own authority, cut off members of Christ, for whom He died, from the body of the church; cut them off, I repeat, neither from the church nor from the blessed sacraments unless a Synod, national and not merely provincial, has so ordained for the glory of God and the edification of our neighbour, after ripe consideration. In such a case people would not be debarred from communion for matters of indifference but because they set up sects apart and broke the unity of the church. Questions of discipline should be held in a different degree of respect to the laws of God which every one, without exception, is bound to obey. These, gentlemen, are my views on the subject in dispute, and I pray you to uphold me and not to take umbrage at my words nor think ill of me. And if, by chance, any one of you is especially offended with me, remember that we are all prone to error and need God’s pardon daily for our wrongdoing. And now that you have this full and ample declaration from me I beg you, in God’s name, to see that M. Berault does not in future publicly preach against the faults of which he says I am guilty, so that I am not made a cause for scandal to the congregation to whom I cannot explain my conduct as I can to you. Furthermore, gentlemen, since we are all mortal and have no sure morrow, if it should be God’s will to take me from this world before the dispute is settled I fear the affair will never be properly

understood ; I therefore beg you to keep in safe custody for future reference, first, my complaint against M. Berault in your consistory, and the judgment I required of you ; secondly, my confession of faith ; thirdly, my appeal which I should wish you to produce at the National Synod ; fourthly, this present declaration and petition. All these documents are written and signed with my own hand and I have kept copies of them. These I offer to collate with the originals sent to you as I intend to use them in my appeal to the National Synod. I hope this will be received in the same loving kindness with which I offer it and I pray God that He will pour down His Holy Spirit on us for Christ's sake, so that we may labour for His glory and for the edification of His church.

“ Gentlemen, I forgot to mention that if M. du Plessis and I had found the rule generally accepted when we first came to Montauban we should have been extremely loth to cause dissension in this church. I am certain that my husband would have wished me to conform and I should have agreed with him. But the truth was, we found the split already made so that certain people finding themselves debarred from communion without as they alleged being heard in their own defence, appealed to the magistrates of Toulouse. You cannot be ignorant how detrimental such a course must be to our religion nor how greatly all sober people deplored it. And even if the affair had been confined within our own town I still saw another most regrettable result both here and in the vicinity. Altar was opposed to altar either because the nobility would not condescend to observe your rules, or because you, the ministers, were not in agreement among yourselves, which seemed to point to the lack of any clear commandment on the part of the synod. It was therefore obvious that even if I discarded my wig the difficulty would be in no way lessened. And as I could not heal the schism by any compliance on my own part with a rule made neither by God nor the synod I did not feel called upon to obey you. Gentlemen, some

of you, knowing how little I care how I dress my hair, may think I have been solicited by others to take up their cause. I therefore declare, before God whom I call in witness, who knows the hearts of men and judges their inmost thoughts, that I have been solicited by no one. My only motives are those already laid before you. I submit everything to M. du Plessis and my sole desire is that you should understand my position to your own enlightenment and the tranquillity of your consciences as well as to take from you any reason to think evil of me.

“Written on Wednesday the 9th April 1584.”

Having read the above declaration Mlle du Plessis left on the Friday before Sacrament Day, accompanied by all those of her household who were eligible to partake the Lord's Supper, and went to Villemeux three leagues beyond Montauban which belongs to the same colloquy. She explained everything that had passed at Montauban to M. l'Hardy, the minister, and to several of the Elders who came to call on her and was admitted to communion. The whole affair was then referred to the National Synod which was to be held at Montpellier in the following month of May, which may God illuminate with His Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER IX

THE WAR OF THE LEAGUE

M. DU PLESSIS was still in Paris at the end of 1584. He had just entered into his 35th year, and, thinking how uncertain all human life was and that his own, more than most, was never free from danger he made his will. He wrote it with his own hand and had it signed by two notaries. He did this more for the instruction of our children than for any other reason because he left their upbringing and the management of their property entirely in my hands. About this same time he wrote his meditations of the 6th, the 32nd and the 34th psalms. That on the 25th was written later at Montauban just at the beginning of the war of the League.

At the new year, 1585, he returned to the court of Navarre after concluding his negotiation with the King at Paris.¹ He found the King of Navarre at Sainte Foi and all the most important protestants with him, waiting to hear what news he brought. He laid the whole result before them and his success filled them with the greatest joy. Meantime M. de Laval had gone straight home and had left M. du Plessis to make the report of their joint mission. M. du Plessis, on his own initiative, told them bluntly that they must not rest contented with what he told them because war was certain to break out again in a fresh place, for the Lorraine people were on the very point of exploding and that they could not look out for their own safety too soon. He particularly urged His Majesty not to purchase La Ferté from the Vidame, as the late M. de Segur had advised, urging that it

¹ See p. 195, for negotiation carried on by M. de Laval and M. du Plessis.

would be wiser to send the money to Germany to hire mercenaries. The King, however, would not listen to him. M. de Turenne was at Court, lately returned from captivity in the Low Countries. During his absence in Paris certain malicious people had done M. du Plessis a very ill turn, for they had contrived to get the King of Navarre to appoint M. de Turenne as chief controller of the King's household over both him and M. de Clervant. M. du Plessis' answer to this move was as follows : " That he would be only too sorry to be the occasion for the King of Navarre to lose the services of so valuable a servant as M. de Turenne, or even to cause him discontent in any way, so that he was perfectly willing to resign his office. At the same time he must say quite plainly that he would rather have no appointment at all than continue in one with diminished dignity and authority ; at the same time if others were appointed as their companions and equals he and M. de Clervant would welcome them as so many more witnesses of their honest dealing." On hearing which His Majesty did no more in the matter. Later on M. de Turenne himself saw how unwise the scheme had been and valued M. du Plessis' friendship higher than that of its originators.

And so now we come to the war of the League, which started at the end of March 1585, and whose end will come in God's good pleasure. I never saw M. du Plessis worried by this war, for his opinion never faltered that it would bring an increase of honour and reputation to our King¹ now reigning. When the first news of the war reached the court of Navarre, the King asked M. du Plessis what his opinion was. M. du Plessis answered in these words, which he has often since recalled : " Thank God, Sire, that your enemies, and not you, have begun this war. It was certain to come and it is better that it should come in the present King's reign, than in yours, should you succeed him ; easier to bear while you are young than when you are old ; and if we labour we shall

¹ Henri IV, then King of Navarre.

at least leave our children at rest. Your enemies take God's name in vain but vengeance is the Lord's. Much trouble lies before you but you will win through all, and no Prince ever emerged from a war with more glory than I am certain you will win in this if you continue in the fear of the Lord. As for my part I vow that nothing will be too hot or too cold that you bid me do in your service." The King has often since borne witness that this vow was faithfully kept.

It looked at first as if the King (of France) meant to gather his forces against the League, although M. du Plessis expected their attack would soon be turned against the protestants. This, however, they would not be in a position to do until four or five months had elapsed. In the meantime the King of Navarre's policy was to unite his supporters and munition the towns as quietly as he could for in point of fact they were all so destitute of stores of corn owing to the treaties of peace, that before harvest any one of them might have been taken by famine without difficulty. The League justified their action partly on the ground that they were safeguarding the public welfare, and partly that they were opposing the reformed religion and they scattered their writings broadcast to this effect. In reply M. du Plessis undertook to plead with all Frenchmen in a paper which bore good fruit. But when it became apparent that the storm was about to burst on the King of Navarre and the protestants, M. du Plessis was bidden to draw up a statement¹ to inform all Europe of the justice of the said King's cause, and of the wrong done him. It is in this paper that the offer was made, provided the King (of France) would hold the stakes, to punish the insolence of the Lorrainers, or rather, the better to spare the poor people of France, to meet them man to man, ten against ten or twenty against twenty as they chose, and in any place ordered by the King. This defiance, written with the King of Navarre's own hand, was read in full Council

¹ "Declaration du Roi de Navarre contre les Calomnies de la Ligue." See *Letters of de Mornay*, ed. 1824.

and was forthwith sent to all Christian Princes, to the great honour of the aforesaid King. But not one of the Houses of Lorraine and Guise made any reply. When this offer of a duel was first broached M. du Plessis was told to put it into words but he only consented to do so on condition that, if the offer were accepted, he should be among the chosen champions. And to this request the King very readily agreed.

It would take too long to give particulars of all his writings during the ensuing war, for he never let an occasion go by when he thought he could serve the cause of France, of the churches and of his master. There are several whole volumes of these writings, and especially of foreign dispatches and manifestos to the public, which nearly all came from his pen. I remember one in particular, drawn up in accordance with his firm conviction, that whatever edicts of union between the King and the Guises might be published there never would be real agreement between them; and this being so their attacks would be ill-consorted and feeble, which opinion was not only shown to be true throughout the whole course of the war but was finally proved by the death of the Duke of Guise.

M. du Plessis had made a plan for an attack on Toulouse, but before proposing it to the King of Navarre he wanted to reconnoitre the place himself, a matter which proved very hazardous. One evening he rode to within a league of the town with ten horse but all unarmed when, passing through a little place called St Geniz, the villagers took the alarm and he had scarcely time to reach the further gate before they attacked him. Further on at a house, in which he expected to shelter, he found that M. de Verdale, colonel of the Duc de Joyeuse's¹ infantry, had already taken possession, so he had to pass it by. The people of St Geniz had set the beacon on the belfry alight so that the whole countryside was up, bugles

¹ Anne de Joyeuse, 1561-1587; one of Henri III's favourites; m. Marguerite de Lorraine, the queen's sister; killed at the battle of Coutras.

blowing and roads blocked on every side. Not being able to do any reconnoitring that night he managed to reach Foix instead, where he was very well received by M. de Benergue, son of the late President de Mansencal, who, although he did not know him, welcomed him on the faith of one of his company. On the morrow he recrossed the Garonne above Toulouse, and rode by the islands to the various spots which he wanted to spy out. He got so close to them that by the light of the full moon he could see everything quite plainly, and could report to the King of Navarre that his scheme was perfectly feasible. He drew up a plan which he gave to His Majesty, who promised that M. du Plessis should command the first 500 soldiers to enter Toulouse. The infantry however were so constantly occupied elsewhere with the defence of so many and of such scattered places that His Majesty could never carry out this plan.

At the beginning of the year 1586, the Duke of Mayenne came into Guienne with an army which rumour said was formidable. The King of Navarre, who was at Caumont sur Garonne, sent for all the chief nobles and captains of that part of the country. M. de Turenne was charged with the defence of the Dordogne, a task in which he acquired a great reputation both for courage and prudence. It was not certain whether the Duke of Mayenne meant to cross the Dordogne near Souillac, on his way into Quercy, and so the King of Navarre, who wanted to be ready whatever happened, sent M. du Plessis to Montauban to be on the watch. At the same time he was left almost without troops, for all the best were posted on those parts of the frontier which seemed most likely to be attacked. In spite of all precautions the Duke of Mayenne crossed the river at Souillac and marched into Upper Quercy, where the protestants had barely time to bring up enough arms of all sorts to secure Figeac, Caviac and Cardillac, all of which towns would certainly have fallen if the enemy had known the state they were in and had shown the smallest perseverance in attacking

them. One thing following on another M. du Plessis stayed on at Montauban, where I and our household were living, for fifteen months. During this time, without going into details, the fortifications of the new town were finished at his earnest request, the Bourbon town was put into a state of defence and rebuilt, and the suburb of the Tarn was brought within the walls. Several times he took the town's cannon beyond the walls to clear out the wretched little fortresses which kept Montauban in subjection and he always met with success and sometimes with God's special favour. Three times over he revictualled the town of Le Maz du Verdun with every sort of food and ammunition. He crossed into Gascony and rousing M. de Fontrailles, who was in command of Armagnac, together they saved the town of L'Isle en Jourdain, which was blockaded with nine forts, and which had food for only six days left; thence he quickly recrossed to Montauban and threw himself just in time into Villemur, where M. de Reniez was in command. This place was not thought to be capable of defence and was not fortified, but with the help of Messrs de Savaillan and de Suz and a number of other gentlemen they checked the successful march of the Duke of Joyeuse, whose army was menacing the place but a short way off. From Villemur he did his best to save Salvaignac and every one knows he would have succeeded if the least help had been given him. One particular I will mention concerning this affair of Villemur. The King of Navarre, thinking his actions inexplicable sent him word that "while he praised his good heart he could not help blaming him for wasting it on so worthless an object as Villemur." In spite of all that his friends could say to dissuade him he maintained that this place, worthless though it were, was yet the link between Languedoc and Guienne, which two provinces, were it lost, would be left without any means of communication and that this being so it was as well that someone should lose himself in saving it. During his stay at Villemur he also dis-

covered a plot against Montauban hatched by two brothers, M. de Claux and M. de Brésolles, nephews of M. de Tarride, Governor of Montauban, and whose house was only a league outside that town. This plot was proved by letters written by the two brothers to M. de Mayenne, to the Seneschal of Toulouse and to others, and there was every probability that it would have succeeded for M. de Tarride had such absolute confidence in his nephews. All these affairs won him a great reputation but they also aroused a great deal of jealousy and this all the more because everywhere people appealed to him. Leaving Villemur he went into Gascony to relieve Leyrac which the Marshal de Matignon¹ was threatening, and he succeeded in entering it with reinforcements. Thence, all fear of a siege blowing over, he went on to Nérac. There I and all our family joined him. I obtained a passport from the Marshal de Matignon, who moreover received me very kindly as we passed through Agen. This was at the beginning of 1587 and it was just about the same time that M. de Turenne also came to Nérac. M. du Plessis was able to be of great use to M. de Turenne and with an excellent result. Unhappily this was brought to an end by a shot from an arquebus which wounded M. de Turenne at the fort of Nicole sur Garonne just as he was coming back from a round to see how the watch was kept and while M. du Plessis was actually speaking with him.

During our time at Montauban God gave us a daughter who only lived three months. We had asked M. de Châtillon to be her godfather but as he was detained in Rouergue defending it against the Duke of Joyeuse he could not come. M. Antoine de Chardien, generally known as M. Sadeil, a gentleman of Dauphiné and a most worthy minister of God held the child as his proxy; her godmother was Suzanne de Pas, my daughter by my first marriage. We buried the child at Montauban.

¹ Jacques de Goyon de Matignon, 1525-1597, Marshal of France, Lieutenant-Général of Guienne; recognized Henri de Navarre on death of Henri III.

The King of Navarre sent for M. du Plessis to come to him at la Rochelle. This he was willing to do and all the more readily because he foresaw the necessity for making preparations to meet the said King's foreign troops. So at the end of June he set out and on the way had the good luck to raise the siege of Linde sur Dordogne, which the Périgord nobles were besieging. Accompanied by a few friends he presently reached the King of Navarre and afterwards never left him throughout the rest of the war, nor was there any deed or exploit up to his master's accession to the throne of France in which he did not play his part. The King even did him the honour to say more than once that he had discussed his most important undertakings with him alone and that he had always found his advice good. M. du Plessis on his arrival found the King of Navarre deeply involved in the war with the Duke of Joyeuse, who since his return to the French court from Rouergue and Albigeois had been dispatched into Poitou with a fresh army. There he had obtained several noteworthy advantages over the King of Navarre by the capture of St Maixant, Maillezay and other places. The arrogance of the Duke had grown to such a pitch in consequence that, as was proved by letters between him and others which M. du Plessis intercepted and deciphered himself, he aimed at nothing less than making himself chief of the League. As he was on the point of returning to Court it was anticipated that his army would scatter as soon as he departed and His Majesty therefore determined to follow hard on his heels. This move met with complete success. For although it was contrary to the advice of almost every one (who not daring to blame the master fell upon his servant), the King of Navarre defeated several companies of the Duke's army, captured M. de Joyeuse's own cornet near to Chinon, blockaded M. de Lavardin and the army under him in La Haye in Touraine, opened a passage across the Loire at Monsoreau which enabled the Count of Soissons and the troops of Normandy and Beauce to cross the

river, and all this achieved with no larger force than two hundred horse and three hundred foot-soldiers. It should be noted that they who reaped the glory for this drive were the very same who had most strongly advised against it. This first piece of good fortune brought about a second for the Duke of Joyeuse, bent on revenge, determined to give the King of Navarre battle at no matter what cost. The battle of Coutras, fought on the 20th of October 1587, was the result, when a complete victory was won by the said King. M. du Plessis had the honour of fighting at his side. He noted that on this very day twelve years before (making allowance that is for the ten days deducted by the Pope) he had been made prisoner at Dormans. I have seen several letters among his papers which he wrote from la Rochelle to friends both within and without the kingdom, in which he said that a battle would be fought within a week and that God would give them the victory. And I have often heard him say that on the morning his only fear was lest the Duke of Joyeuse would decline the battle, because then the King of Navarre would have been helpless between two rivers and two armies. His Majesty wrote to the King (of France) by M. de la Burte, *maître des requêtes*, saying how deeply he deplored the shedding of so much blood and to beseech him to put a stop to it for the good of his kingdom ; but the times were not yet ripe and the King would not heed.

M. du Plessis was ordered to write a short account of this battle. Owing to the omission of two lines in a copy made by M. du Pin, secretary of State, which was sent to La Rochelle, in which the Prince of Condé was spoken of with all due honour and respect for his rank, the said Prince was highly offended and sent the bitterest complaint to the King of Navarre. The King took the matter up in the sharpest manner possible but M. du Plessis could show by his notes that the Prince had no complaint against him. M. du Plessis thought it strange that this victory was not better followed up. The

truth is that the King of Navarre did propose that he should effect a union with his foreign troops, which would certainly have been the most fruitful result of the victory, but his army, gathered in haste, wanted a breathing space to go home, promising to gather again at Périgord in a month's time. So the King went to Béarn to see his sister. On his return his advance was interrupted by the Maréchal Matignon who had brought up his troops to the relief of Aire. It was this which made him summon M. du Plessis who was resting at Nérac in the bosom of his family. It was God's will that I should be seized with the pains of childbirth at the very moment when he was mounting at the head of his troops. I was delivered of a daughter two hours after he had ridden off. She was christened Sara but she only lived three months, and was buried at Nérac. Her godfather was M. de Bouquet, Lord of Brueil in Normandy (a cousin of M. du Plessis', descendant of a Mlle de Mornay), a valiant gentleman, religious and learned; her godmother was Dame Georgette de Montenay, also a cousin, widow of the late M. de St Germain in Gascony, a woman of high virtue, who has even written various things. ✓

On his return from Béarn towards the end of 1587 news came to the King of Navarre of the defeat of his foreign troops,¹ which greatly troubled many of his adherents, especially those who had come to join him from north of the Loire. This made him go to Montauban to discuss what could best be done in the matter, thinking that he should meet the Prince of Condé and M. de Montmorenci there. However, he failed to see them. Whilst there certain deputies demanded a general Assembly of all the Churches for the healing of this sore wound, to which the King of Navarre would not assent. However, M. du Plessis persuaded him on the grounds that such a disaster could be best met by such a remedy, which would tend to keep men steady in the path of duty who might otherwise

¹ Mercenaries raised in Germany and paid by the Queen of England.

seek for personal and private relief. But in the end, owing to the dilatoriness of the provinces, the Assembly could not be held before the end of the following year. After taking two or three places His Majesty returned to Nérac. There he heard of the Prince's¹ death by poison. It was M. du Plessis who broke the news to him privately, adding "that a heavy loss had befallen him, and that though our arms and nerves might give us pain still they were arms and nerves, and that the Prince was always an arm even when he was most difficult, and that his loss was one nothing could make good." His Majesty received the news with infinite sorrow, and sending for the Comte de Soissons² to come to his private room, they wept a long time together. The King made ready that very day to ride to La Rochelle but they could not reach it before Marans had been captured by M. de Lavardin. M. du Plessis and a small company of friends followed the King on the next day. He found the Lady de la Trémoille,³ the Prince's widow, had already been arrested as an accomplice in his murder. It was a very perplexing case, badly managed from the beginning and it gave M. du Plessis an immense amount of trouble before its end.

This year passed by in various negotiations and enterprises. Marans was retaken with no small measure of perseverance and courage, and the King confided to M. du Plessis all the preliminary reconnaissances and preparations necessary for the final success of the undertaking. The regiment of Gerzay was defeated by a great cavalry charge, three leagues from Nantes; Beauvais sur Mer was besieged and captured in the finest way imaginable. This success was all the more important because M. du Plessis had already obtained the King's consent to his sailing down to St Nazare in Brittany and thereby controlling the only mouth of the river Loire which is

¹ Henri de Bourbon, Prince de Condé. He was reputed to be poisoned but without real proof. d. March 1588.

² Charles de Bourbon, half-brother to Henri, Prince de Condé.

³ Charlotte Catherine de la Trémoille, m. Prince de Condé 1586.

navigable and which he planned to fortify with all speed. So as to assist the first successes in these parts he carried with him in the boat ready-made fortifications of bullet-proof palisades and supports. He had with him three hundred labourers, quantities of tools and food and munitions for three months. The Baron de Salignac and his regiment were to aid him and the King of Navarre gave M. du Plessis the Governorship of the country. But God, whose will was otherwise, showed His displeasure with the project by preventing the boats from reaching the sea, and by making all landing impossible by the fury of the winds. The army under M. de Nevers¹ arriving in the vicinity finally forced M. du Plessis to make good his retreat. The wonders of God were, however, made manifest in a much greater way, for just when the King (of France) was making preparations to reap the benefit of the defeat of our foreign army the Duke of Guise drove him out of Paris on the *Journée des Barricades*.² And later when they had patched up their quarrel by the second Edict of Union and had summoned the Estates General to meet at Blois for the purpose of declaring the Edict to be the law of the land, just at the very moment when the Duke was writing out both his appointment as Constable and the King of Navarre's degradation as heir to the throne against the judgment of all men, the King had him killed in his own private room.³ I had recently brought our household to La Rochelle, after a visit to Béarn, whither I had gone to pay my respects to Madame, the King of Navarre's only sister, and also to benefit by the hot springs. I remember that several of M. du Plessis' friends urged him, some by word of mouth and some in letters to him, to write against this Assembly at Blois, protesting its nullity. Some were even angry because he declined to do so, and I remember quite well the answer he made to one and all,

¹ Louis de Gonzague, 1539-1595; Duc de Nevers through his wife Henriette de Cleves, heiress of her brother.

² May 1588.

³ December 1588.

which can yet be seen among his papers. It was to this effect : that if anything good came out of the Assembly and our party had condemned it beforehand, no profit could accrue to us ; while if evil came, we being neither summoned nor heard, it could do us no harm ; and moreover the fact of omitting to summon the King of Navarre was in itself a cause of nullity ; and moreover if the attention of the Assembly were drawn to this fact and the King of Navarre were, in consequence, to be summoned it would do him less than no good. And to conclude they could see that he expected that something or other would happen in this Assembly which would glorify God and turn to the comfort of His Churches.

A short time before the death of the Duke of Guise and almost at the same date as the opening of the Estates General at Blois the Assembly of the Churches was held at la Rochelle, in which the King of Navarre was helped in no small fashion by M. du Plessis against certain innovations which were threatened. These arose from the ill success of certain measures, principally the defeat of the foreign army, which made some people accuse the King of Navarre and talk of limiting his authority in the management of affairs. M. du Plessis was suffering from quaternion fever at the time but in spite of it he worked harder than ever. He was the more eager because he knew very well that those who hold office are always open to slander, for since the outbreak of the war the King had appointed him *surintendant* of the public revenue. So soon as the Assembly began to inquire into matters of finance M. du Plessis rose and begged His Majesty graciously to allow him to retire, and also to do him the honour to command all those present to speak their minds freely and frankly against him on the condition that he should be allowed to reply to their charges, and thereupon he left the hall. The result was that every one earnestly begged him to continue in office with undiminished authority. And on the subject of his salary instead of the 1200 crowns a year with which

he had been contented they allowed him 1600 and, moreover, made him Chief of the Council which was appointed to assist the King of Navarre in matters of Church and State. All of which was not done without arousing the spite and envy of certain people who had hoped to turn the Assembly against him. I can very truly say that he wanted nothing so much as to be relieved of this office, which was afterwards made clear enough. For the truth is that, as by nature he loves to make people happy, the office could bring nothing but worry in the depleted state of the exchequer. And as for his private affairs in fourteen years of service no one could accuse him of putting a penny into his own purse, paying a debt or buying so much as a foot of land. On the contrary every one marvelled how he could manage at all for when he took over the finances nothing came to the King of Navarre from Languedoc or Dauphiné, all Guienne above l'Isle was in M. de Turenne's hands, and as for the King's patrimony it had been entirely seized, so that Xaintonges and Poitou were the only sources of revenue and only the half of these were in his control, for he had nothing but the *tailles* and certain profits which accrued from the ocean. And yet the King's household was kept up in its usual style: the officers were paid; an extraordinary number of gentlemen were maintained; the garrisons were never a day in arrears, neither were the mounted harquebusiers who formed the base of all the King's successful cavalry operations; the artillery lacked for nothing and great sums of money were found for an incredible number of journeys, both within and without the Kingdom.

The capture of Niort happily followed soon after in the same week as the death of the Duke of Guise. This capture was planned in private by the King of Navarre and M. du Plessis and the latter had charge of the scaling ladders. From thence the King went to the aid of Ganache which M. du Nevers was besieging. On his way he fell ill in a country house in Poitou called la Motte

Freslon, which made it impossible to raise the siege as they had had every hope of doing. The illness was an attack of pleurisy which seized the King as he rode from Marueil to la Motte Freslon. He kept no one but M. du Plessis by him, who, in the absence of M. d'Ortoman, the King's most excellent doctor, undertook to bleed His Majesty. M. du Plessis did this with the more confidence because he had himself suffered three attacks of the same complaint, and the King felt relief from the treatment. His only consolation was found in the singing of the psalms and in sweet and comfortable words. His life was in danger and rumour even said he was dead. Whilst he lay ill the Queen Mother died at Blois a few days after the Duke of Guise's execution.

CHAPTER X

ACCESSION OF HENRI IV

IT was the opinion of many people that the deaths of the Duke of Guise and of the Queen Mother would put a stop to the civil war, but M. du Plessis did not agree. He explained his reasons in two letters which he wrote at La Rochelle to the King of Navarre, who was at St Jean d'Angely, and which he sent by the hand of M. de Frontenac, the bearer of the news of the Duke's death. Briefly he wrote as follows: "The King of Navarre ought to praise God, not so much because he was rid of a formidable enemy, as because this enemy's death stained neither his hand nor his conscience; but that he must not look for peace as a result of this death because, without doubt, horror at the deed would rouse the nation and arm the Duke of Mayenne; that for the next four months the King (of France) would not dare to appeal to him lest his devotion to catholicism should seem less than before; and that, finally, it was greatly to be hoped that the Duke of Mayenne would show a bold front so that the King might have the more reason and need for appealing for help." When the King of Navarre, fresh from hearing the joyful news, read this he exclaimed: "These are but cold words to write on such news." The people of La Rochelle talked of illuminating the town, but M. du Plessis was against it and would not allow it, saying that there was abundant reason for adoring the judgments of God but none for rejoicing, as it were, over a human sacrifice. Indeed he often regretted that the late King, being driven to meet conspiracy with

violence, had not justified the necessity and justice of his deed before Christendom by bringing the Duke to a solemn trial.

The Duke of Mayenne carried on the war against the King of France and several towns surrendered to him and everything conspired to show that no peace could be made between them. The King of Navarre went to La Rochelle and to free himself from all business he left M. du Plessis and his Council at Niort. Thither I went to meet my husband. That very same day, however, the King of Navarre sent for him in such urgent haste that he rode all night and reached the King at his levee. The King took him apart into a gallery and, saying that he would never decide on matters of real importance without consulting him, told him of several projected plans. One was for an attack on Brouage, another on Saintes, and he explained how these schemes could be carried out, adding that before he went any further he wanted M. du Plessis' advice. M. du Plessis replied that an attack on either Brouage or Saintes was a fine project and worthy of him, but that neither could be carried through in less than two months while France in the meantime would be perishing and helpless. The King of Navarre should rather turn his thoughts to her salvation and, according to his own belief, His Majesty ought to march on the Loire without loss of time and with the best equipment and troops he could muster. There was a project on foot against Saumur which, if it succeeded, would give him a passage across the Loire; if it failed he must then seize all the towns on this side of the river so that the King (of France), feeling himself between two hostile forces and unable to withstand either, would make peace with the one he had least deeply offended, to wit with the King of Navarre. This advice so pleased the King of Navarre that he gave M. du Plessis his hand in pledge that he would follow it and that no one should turn him aside, for in truth all his council was against it, as various members have since confessed. This matter settled, the King

of Navarre bade him ride back to Niort and to keep four cannon and their train in readiness. This M. du Plessis managed to do although he had to get the equipage together anyhow and change it after every day's march. I can truthfully say I never saw him put to greater trouble in his life. However, it was obvious that he must needs make a virtue of necessity.

This march on the Loire succeeded so completely that France reaps the benefit of it to this very day. Learning on his way that the attempt on Saumur had failed he went straight on and, without so much as seeing the cannon, Loudun, Châtellerault, Monstreuil Bellay, L'Isle Bouchard, and Thouars opened their gates, and the King of Navarre and his army arrived within three leagues of Tours in perfect safety. There his forces and the King's drank from the same brook, drawn together by mutual need, and without asking any questions or waiting for any treaty. Between St Maure and Châtellerault M. de Buhy, M. du Plessis' elder brother, arrived under cover of paying his brother a visit with the permission of the King of France. When M. du Plessis heard of his brother's arrival he turned to the King, his master, saying, although he had no certain knowledge to go on, "Sire, give thanks to God. Everything is going right. My brother does not come to see *me*. He comes to treat with *you* on the King's behalf." Seeing that the treaty, which was in truth proposed by M. de Buhy, advanced but slowly, article by article, the King of Navarre let M. du Plessis know that it would be well for him to go and see the King himself and hasten matters. This was not an easy thing to do, considering all that had come and gone in the past; but, putting his trust in the knowledge that he went for the good of France and for the salvation of the King and kingdom, M. du Plessis contrived to slip into Tours one evening without a passport. The King was extremely afraid lest the Nuncio should hear of it and therefore bade M. du Plessis to come to him at ten o'clock that night. He found the

King much more ready to negotiate with the protestant party than he had ever been before, and he augured well from this. A few days later this mission resulted in a truce between the two Kings and the articles were published on April 1589. In accordance with these articles the town of Saumur was handed over to the King of Navarre, and with the consent of both Kings M. du Plessis was appointed to the command of the town as *Lieutenant du Roi*. The late King often declared that his high opinion of M. du Plessis and his certainty that his subjects would be treated well by him were not the least of the reasons which made him agree to the appointment. The secret articles of the truce (the others are well known to every one) were as follows: That the protestants should not be subject to attack throughout the whole of France: that before the truce expired the King should make peace: that in the meantime protestant worship could be held anywhere in the King of Navarre's army, in any place where the said King might be and also in whatever town chosen for his passage across the Loire. This was to have been Pont de Cé but as the Governor of that town made difficulties, Saumur had to be chosen instead, on the understanding that protestant worship was not to be held publicly for the first four months. This arrangement was scrupulously observed by M. du Plessis and no services were held during this stipulated period except in his own house. As for the other towns and the provinces it was agreed that in each *baillage* the King of Navarre might have one place selected where worship could be held provided that the said place acknowledged the King's authority and was neither the residence of a Bishop nor of a *chef du Baillage*. As for the ministers of the Gospel in those provinces in which the protestants had taken up arms the King agreed that their salaries should be continued at the rate of 200 crowns per annum, for all alike, to be paid out of the *decimes des généralités* in each province. There was great opposition to this last clause because, as there were already

charges on the *decimes* it was ordered that they should be paid twice over so as to meet both claims.

It is inconceivable what difficulties arose during this negotiation. They can be studied in the letters which passed between the King of Navarre and M. du Plessis discussing every tiny detail. There were even some people who persuaded the King of Navarre that he was being tricked and that the whole negotiation was nothing but a court jest so that he was induced to treat with a certain Captain Pol, lieutenant to M. de Lessart, the Governor of Saumur, for the delivery of that town into his hands for the sum of eight thousand crowns. This Captain Pol was really plotting to seize the King of Navarre and his followers under the pretence of dealing honestly with him, and the plot was only frustrated by M. du Plessis' arrival at Gonnor just as the troops were starting for Saumur. M. du Plessis plainly told the King of Navarre that he would call down the curse of France on his head if he went, and that all his hopes would be shattered just because of his love of a frolic, and because he preferred to force his way over the river than cross it peacefully at the summons of the King, who was only waiting to admit him into France. On his part M. de Buhy was of immense service in combating the King's distrust and in inducing him to rely whole-heartedly on the King of Navarre's assistance, in spite of allegations on the one hand that the said King had been too deeply injured for his offers to be honest, and on the other too weak for them to be of any use. However, an end was reached at last and on the 15th of April 1589 M. du Plessis marched into Saumur without any opposition and established a garrison there taken from M. de Préaux' regiment. He pledged the King of Navarre on his own security for the sum of 8000 crowns to be paid to M. de Lessart and M. de Lestelle, deeming the money was due to them rather than to the Captain Pol to whom the King of Navarre had promised it. This money was duly paid to them by M. du Plessis later on. M. du Plessis took

his oath at the city gate in the presence of M. de Beaulieu Ruzé,¹ Secretary of State, who thereupon gave the keys of the city into his hands. This delivery of Saumur was thought to be a matter of such importance by all responsible men that unknown to the King a number of people at Tours privately subscribed 10,000 crowns among themselves, which they gave to M. de Lessart on condition that he should make no difficulty about giving up the town. This was over and above the adequate recompense which the King gave him both in money down and in land out of the royal domain. At the same time the King of Navarre's declaration on his crossing the Loire was published, which was written by M. du Plessis by the command and pleasure of the late King. This declaration was read aloud to His Majesty, word by word, and approved by him before it was printed.

On the 17th April the King of Navarre made his entry into Saumur and three days later rode off towards Chateau du Loir in the hope of falling in with some of the Duke of Mayenne's troops. This attempt was, however, countermanded by the King (of France) who had been warned that the Duke of Mayenne was on the march with all his forces, and so the King of Navarre turned aside to Maillé. Thence, not without great unwillingness on the part of his followers and many doubts in his own mind, he went to kiss the King's hand at Plessis-les-Tours, relying solely on the honour of his escort, the Maréchal d'Aumont.² The meeting between the two Kings was deeply moving, not only from the perfect frankness with which they met each other, after all that had come and gone, but also from the joy which lit up the faces of all those present who felt that the salvation of France depended upon it. Every eye turned to gaze on the King of Navarre whose great-heartedness was shown by his coming. Immediately the interview

¹ Martin Ruzé de Beaulieu, Secrétaire des Finances from 1588-1606.

² Jean d'Aumont, 1522-1595, Marshal of France, supported Henri de Navarre on the death of Henri III.

was over the King of Navarre wrote to M. du Plessis to relate all that had happened and his satisfaction at his reception. M. du Plessis replied in a letter which began with these words, "Sire, you have done exactly what you ought to have done, but what no one dared advise you to do."

A few days after this meeting of the two Kings, while the King of Navarre was away with his troops in the neighbourhood of Chinon, M. de Mayenne attacked St Siphorian, a suburb of Tours north of the river, and did a great deal of damage. There was a furious skirmish there to the great alarm of the town, and the citizens loudly called on the King of Navarre for help, although the King (of France) was himself present. There was such a scarcity of munitions that the King sent a courier to ride post-haste all night to Saumur, to beg M. du Plessis to dispatch twenty hundredweight of powder without loss of time. The King also warned him to set a guard in the suburb of Saumur known as La Croix Verte. M. du Plessis lodged four companies of foot-soldiers there protecting them with some sort of slight barricades. A few days later he began the fortifications with all speed such as still exist at the present day. About this same time I arrived at Saumur with all our household, to be near to M. du Plessis. I must confess that, if we were to be driven from our own home in so good a cause I had always longed for some settled place of abode where we could live with our children. The governorship first of Castres and then of Albret, on the death of the Count de Gurson, and of other places as well had been suggested, but the King of Navarre would not seriously consider them because he could not do without M. du Plessis' constant attendance. But God, whose will it was that we should leave all things in His hands, provided this refuge for us at the time and in the place where we could best serve both His Church and our own affairs. ✓

M. du Plessis was incapacitated from accompanying the two Kings on their journey to Paris by a violent attack of

tertiary fever. It was brought on by all the heavy work he had gone through and it lasted for fully forty-nine fits. But the length of the attack was due to the sickness of the times rather than to his own illness, because everything that happened through these months did more to aggravate his suffering than all that diet and medicine could do to cure it. I took him to Tours by boat, ill as he was, partly on business connected with his Governorship and partly for a consultation with the doctors on his malady. Two leagues short of Tours, whilst we rested in a little inn, two letters were delivered to him, one close on the top of the other. The first was from M. de St Martin de Villangluse the other from M. de Montlouet and both brought by messengers riding post-haste. The first letter said that wherever M. du Plessis was when the letter reached him he was not to budge. before he had spoken with a gentleman who was on his way to find him; the other, that in whatever place he was found he was to hurry on as fast as ever he could. These contradictory instructions threw him into a great perplexity, and all the more because on questioning M. de Montlouet's messenger he learnt that there was a rumour that one of the two Kings was dead. On hearing this such a violent access of sorrow seized him that he flung himself down on the bed. At this moment M. de Lambert, of Périgord, a gentleman-in-waiting to the King of Navarre, and the younger Armagnac, his first valet, arrived as messengers from both the King himself and the King of Navarre. They told him the whole story. They carried a letter from the King in which he described the wound of which he died two hours after writing this letter. From the King of Navarre they brought messages telling M. du Plessis of the King's death. His Majesty, they said, placed himself in M. du Plessis' hands in everything relating to his service in our parts, regretting his illness but yet congratulating himself that at least it had kept him on the Loire. More particularly he charged him to find a way to get the Cardinal

de Bourbon¹ out of Chinon and away from M. de Chavigny at whatever cost, even to all he had, because if once the Cardinal regained his freedom he would proclaim himself King. On hearing this news M. du Plessis returned at once to Saumur without pursuing his journey further. He travelled all through the night, racked with fever. In the boat on the way down he wrote several dispatches foreseeing that the King's faithful servants would need troops to hold the towns. As soon as each message was written he set one of his men ashore with orders to ride post to the town nearest to the landing-place. It was a most fortunate move on his part for in consequence M. de Parabère, Governor of Niort, came straight to Saumur with part of the regiment under him, and thus, when the loyal citizens of the King at Tours asked M. du Plessis for help, he was able to beg M. de Parabère to go to their succour. And very welcome he was. Others of his friends also came to his aid so that he could strengthen M. de Chavigny at Chinon. At Saumur, although he was aware that the governors in all the neighbouring towns were disarming the inhabitants, he decided to leave things as they were lest the contrary behaviour should be taken as a sign of weakness or fear. And it was our poor town which, in the midst of alarms on all sides, became the refuge of all the princesses and great ladies who had been living at Tours up till now.

During the whole of this harassing time I can truthfully say that I never saw him free from business for a single moment even in the midst of his attacks of fever. He was the mainstay of all loyal servants of the King and the State in our parts, who came or wrote to him for advice all day long. Even members of the Parliament of Paris,² then sitting at Tours under the presidency of

¹ Charles de Bourbon, Cardinal, uncle of Henri de Navarre. The League chose him as successor to Henri III. After the assassination of the Duc de Guise Henri III had placed him in confinement under M. de Chavigny.

² A part of the Parlement de Paris left Paris after the *Journée des Barricades*, 12th May 1588, and supported Henri III, while a part stayed on and adhered to the League.

M. d'Espesses, one of the most important men at this time, were in constant communication with him. There is nothing now improper in saying that things had come to such a pass, even in the opinion of some of the best men, that the parliament determined to advise the King to agree that he and the Cardinal de Bourbon should reign together, by mutual agreement and with the same Council, the one to content the catholics and the other the protestants, just as had been done by certain Emperors according to what was alleged. One of the most prominent members of the court of Parliament came to propose this scheme to M. du Plessis on behalf of his colleagues, adding that they would not press it if it were against his opinion. M. du Plessis replied that they did him too much honour by consulting him but that they must pardon him if he said that they spoke like men unaccustomed to difficulties such as the present; that time could disentangle many things that seemed beyond the wit of man to remedy; that God could bring to pass in a moment things that time could only achieve by a slow process; and that if they had patience they would soon find themselves free from their present anxiety. In the meantime he was busy bargaining to get the Cardinal de Bourbon out of Chinon. He had himself carried to Monsoreau whither I accompanied him, and there he arranged with Mme de Chavigny through the mediation of the Duchess d'Angoulême¹ that the Cardinal should be handed over to him to be treated in whatever manner the King commanded. The conditions agreed on were as follows: that 2000 crowns were to be given immediately to M. de Chavigny to pay the garrison of Chinon, which sum M. du Plessis raised on loan without loss of time so that the agreement should not run the risk of falling through. Further, when the Cardinal was handed over, 6000 crowns were to be paid at once to M. de Chavigny and 14,000 more in six months' time secured on M. du Plessis' word. A day or two before this

¹ Diane, legitimized daughter of Henri II.

bargain was concluded M. de Manou, M. d'O's ¹ brother, came on a similar errand from the King to M. de Chavigny but he met with no success. The day was fixed for M. du Plessis to come for the Cardinal and to make everything as safe as possible it was arranged that Messrs de la Boulaye, de Parabère, de Feuquères (my first husband's nephew) and de Choupes should meet at a certain place on the river Vienne near to Chinon. This they did, bringing quite a large force with them by good fortune. The affair was not altogether free from difficulty for M. de la Châtre ² was planning to attack Chinon and free the Cardinal; he was also secretly trying what bribes could do to help. Also the Cardinal de Vendôme ³ and the Comte de Soissons both angrily threatened M. de Chavigny by letters sent express, if he should dare to let his prisoner leave his hands. On the very day appointed the Comte de Soissons was at Langest with his troops and the Duc d'Epèrnon ⁴ at Noâtre with his, quite enough between them to have stopped the whole thing.

In spite of everything M. du Plessis believed that waiting would only make things worse, and so, ill as he was, he mounted a-horseback and rode with a few of his friends to Chinon to take charge of the Cardinal. He was received by M. de Chavigny in the most friendly manner and with every sign of perfect confidence. M. du Plessis took the Cardinal across the Vienne without loss of time and on the further bank found Messrs de la Boulaye, de Parabère and de Choupes drawn up for battle and ready to escort them to Loudun. The 6000 crowns had been paid down to M. de Chavigny; as for the fourteen thousand instead of paying them down a charge of fourteen hundred crowns per annum on the *tailles* of the *election* of Rochelle was settled on him.

¹ François, Marquis d'O, favourite of Henri III, Surintendant des Finances, supported Henri de Navarre on death of Henri III.

² Claude de la Châtre, 1536-1614; created Marshal of France by the Duc de Mayenne; later supported Henri IV.

³ Charles de Bourbon, 4th son of Louis, 1st Prince de Condé.

⁴ Jean Louis de Nogaret, favourite of Henri III; submitted to Henri IV 1596.

I have heard M. du Plessis relate that the Cardinal tried hard to delay his departure but that he cut him short by telling him that he must be ready in half an hour. When the Cardinal protested that he had no litter, nor mules, nor coach he was told that everything he could want had been provided so that there was no excuse for delay. He was much afraid of being taken to La Rochelle but he was assured that this was not to be done ; then he asked to be taken to Saumur which was a request that M. du Plessis had the King's authority to grant. Several of M. du Plessis' friends urged him to consent on several grounds of great weight but he refused because he felt he would imprison himself by becoming the guardian of so important a prisoner. The worst was that by evening M. du Plessis fell desperately ill of diarrhœa at Loudun brought on by the weak state of his health after four months of ague, and this made it impossible for him to escort the Cardinal any further. This was a bitter blow to his prisoner who had the most complete confidence in him. They all agreed that the Cardinal should be conveyed to the Abbey of Mailezais (in Poitou) and arranged together the method of guarding him. M. de la Boulaye and M. de Parabère jointly undertook to escort him and M. de la Boulaye agreed to act as his guardian. M. de la Boulaye gave a solemn promise to M. du Plessis, on his honour and his faith and signed with his hand, to yield the prisoner to the King or to anyone appointed by him when and where His Majesty should please to command. M. du Plessis gave him two of his Swiss who were always to sleep at the door of the Cardinal's room. Having thus brought off his enterprise M. du Plessis sent off one of his men, called du Morier, to tell the King whom he found at Dieppe and who was overjoyed at the news. He asked for all particulars most carefully and then said : " This is one of the finest bits of service anyone could do me ; M. du Plessis makes very sure of what he undertakes." The truth is M. du Plessis carried this enterprise through at a time when

HENRICVS REX GALLIÆ



HENRI IV

the King was as good as besieged in Dieppe and when his best friends despaired not only of his cause but even of his personal safety.

Among his papers there are a number of notes dealing with the advice he gave the King on his accession to the throne, as well as dispatches both home and foreign and so forth. I will limit myself to two points only. The first was this: that to avoid making any declaration on the subject of religion, as no doubt he would be pressed to do, the King should declare that he could think of nothing whatever until the late King's death was avenged, and that he called on all good Frenchmen to join with him in a crusade in pursuit of so just a vengeance. The second point was this: that to avoid using terms in dispatches which might be unsuitable to the religion he professed and give offence to his co-religionists both at home and abroad, His Majesty should select one of his former Secretaries of State whom he should command to write for him in cases where such difficulties might arise. In fact for want of some such arrangement certain persons were deeply offended whom it has since proved very difficult to appease.

While M. du Plessis was at Loudun the Court of Parliament at Tours sent a warning by M. de Vallegren, brother of M. de Belesbat the chancellor of Navarre and the counsel for the prosecution in this case, that a Cordelier, called Father Marel, who was executed at Tours had confessed that two other monks had left Vendôme with him disguised as laymen and with their tonsures hidden, for the purpose of killing M. du Plessis. Orders being at once issued to be on the watch one of these monks was arrested at Loudun; his name was André Fouquet and he was recognized by certain peculiarities described by the said Marel. Being examined by the judge of the Prévôté of Loudun he avowed his design and gave the names of those who had instigated it. Fearing that he should be thought to bias the course of justice at Loudun, as he belonged to a different religion

to the monk, M. du Plessis sent him before the *Cour de Parlement* at Tours, where he was judged and condemned. Through the diligence of the members of the said court the third man was taken prisoner at Châtellerault but through the treachery, or at least the connivance of M. de Rouet, the Governor of that town, he was liberated in a riot fomented for this very purpose among the townspeople.

As soon as he recovered his strength after his return to Saumur M. du Plessis swept the League out of several forts which its adherents had seized in the vicinity of the town. This done the King sent to him from Tours bidding him join him there and from thence he accompanied His Majesty to the siege of Mans and shared in such other exploits as turned up. His Majesty, whom he had not yet seen since his accession to the throne, showed him in every possible way how highly he valued his services. The first suggestion which M. du Plessis made to the King was the re-establishment of the (protestant) Church by a public Edict. He argued that private and underhand methods would never succeed but would merely excite opposition at every turn. His Majesty took all this in very good part. While they were both listening to a (protestant) sermon in the Abbey of La Couture in a suburb of Mans the King beckoned to M. du Plessis before all the congregation, and whispered in his ear, "Who would have dared to foretell two years ago that the Gospel would be preached at Mans?" "Nor to tell *you*, Sire," he replied, "that it would be preached in the King of France's hall."

Certain people at this time urged His Majesty to merge his patrimony with the royal domain but M. du Plessis successfully prevented this in consideration of Madame, the King's only sister. He pointed out that if the King followed this advice his patrimony would become entailed as the royal domain was. It would follow that if he should die childless his sister would be ousted from the succession; if he should have only

daughters they could get nothing from either source ; if he should have younger sons he could leave them nothing from his patrimony ; if he wanted to raise money his private property, left as it was, could be sold outright for 60, 80 or even 100 per cent. of its value, while if it were converted into crown lands he could get no more than 10 or 12 per cent. for the life interest on it. And moreover he would wrong many of his creditors who had charges on his patrimony by changing the nature of his tenure. Hearing all which arguments His Majesty replied that he would have nothing to do with the proposed change in spite of what anyone said. Calling up the Marshal de Biron¹ he said to him, "I have always felt sure that I ought not to unite my patrimony to the Crown lands but I never clearly understood why until I listened to M. du Plessis' explanations, and now I want you to listen to them too." The Marshal was ever afterwards of the same opinion and I may add that M. du Plessis did Madame, the King's sister, a very important service in the matter. The result was a declaration against uniting the King's patrimony to the royal domain but it has not yet been registered in Parliament. I have often heard M. du Plessis regret that the King had not contented himself with retaining possession without any reference to the Court of Parliament which had its own reasons for refusing its consent at that time.

The King next commanded him to escort the Duchess of Montmorenci as far as Saintonge on her way to rejoin her husband in Languedoc, which he did. The lady carried with her a promise of the Constablership of France. His return to Saumur fell about the end of the year 1589 and he stayed at home till early in the following year. He spent his time in driving out what was left of the enemy from the *Sénéchaussée* of Saumur and the rest of the country under his charge. He left Saumur very hastily on a summons from the King to join him on the field of battle, and spent almost the whole of the year

¹ Armand de Gontaut, baron de Biron, Marshal of France, 1524-1592.

1590 at the King's side. From Châteaudun he wrote me the following letter :

“ Sweetheart. Letters from His Majesty made me hurry away for it seems that M. de Mayenne is about to cross the river. God is with us and will bring their insolence and our misery to an end. Here in this place the Gospel is preached publicly, there have been several baptisms and worthy men are filled with a great sense of consolation. It is a good omen. These things are not done without giving rise to murmurs and there may be complaints ; however, in the King's army they are legal and so I suppose may be done wherever his troops are. I am writing to M. d'Espina to ask him to offer up public prayers ; I know family ones will not be wanting. Let us rest in God who orders all things. We are strong in God, in natural right and in justice. Human means will not fail us. If it comes to a battle victory is certain. Thou shalt soon have news of us, so do not let thyself worry for God will give thee joy and our prayers be changed into thanksgivings.

“ Written at Châteaudun, the 9th March 1590, at nine o'clock at night.”

M. du Plessis reached the King on the 13th of March and on the 14th the battle of Ivry was fought between the King and the Duke of Mayenne. He brought the King eighty men at arms and as many mounted harquebusiers as well as 40,000 crowns in money which came in very opportunely to pay the King's Swiss. By the King's wish he fought on His Majesty's left with his own squadron, where the full force of the Burgundian attack under the Count d'Egmont was felt, as the King has often since testified. These troops of the enemy numbered 15,000 horse. Before charging M. du Plessis bade M. de Fleury, the minister, who accompanied him, offer up prayers at the head of the troops. Next he exhorted his companions to do their duty and then he led them to the charge with only M. de Feuquères, my late husband's nephew, at his side. He rode deep into the mêlée and

the grey Spanish horse which he rode was killed under him by a lance thrust which entered its left flank and came out behind. La Vignolle de Saumur, a follower of his and one of the bravest of the brave, saw him fall and remounted him on his own horse with the help of a landsknecht whom they had taken prisoner, for unaided he was unable to mount on account of the weight of his armour and the stickiness of the soil. Soon after M. du Plessis himself helped to remount la Vignolle on a riderless horse that they met. Ten paces further on M. de Feuquères, going afoot, met with another which he mounted in his turn for a very good horse lent to him by M. du Plessis had been killed in the charge. But M. de Feuquères my nephew was killed just after by a sword wound in his face which he wore uncovered, given him by one of a number of Burgundians whom he attacked as they were retreating. His death was avenged on the spot by la Vignolle. M. du Plessis had great difficulty in judging how the battle went for it was, in truth, extremely confused; at the same time seeing the rally on our side bigger than on the enemy's he hoped for the best. He rode on past the infantry under M. de Vignolles, the *maître de camp*, and close to the landsknechts, to rejoin the King whom he saluted as victor at the head of the troops rallied round him. He left him no more that day. He was much worried about his standard which M. de Granvy a gentleman of Poitou carried but it had the good fortune to pass safely through the charge and to be the first to rally the King's men, and to find itself at Ivry in the victorious pursuit of the enemy.

M. du Plessis had good reason to give God praise this day particularly that, in such a charge, he lost none of his men except poor M. de Feuquères (whom he greatly regretted), and even he was not killed in the chief fighting—There were not many wounded either, although as many as thirteen horses were killed, mostly by sword or lance thrusts. In the pursuit M. du Plessis had the joy to fall in with his brother, M. de Buhy, who was inquiring

everywhere for him. He had only reached the army as the first cannon was fired. The King on reaching Rosny went at once to his private room, accompanied by only two or three and there thanked God for this signal victory. He asked M. du Plessis what he thought of it. "You have succeeded in the bravest folly ever man attempted, Sire," M. du Plessis replied, "for you staked your kingdom on the cast of a die. But you knew the issue lay with God and the fruits of the victory must be consecrated to His use. For the rest, we swear, Sire, to fight for your preservation, but we beseech you to swear us an oath in your turn, which is that you will fight no more in person." More he said on this point which His Majesty took in very good part and promised to do as he was asked. However, so soon as he set eyes on the enemy, he would neither let anyone remind him of this promise nor remember it of himself.

That same evening M. du Plessis himself wrote all the dispatches announcing the victory as the King had no secretary of State with him. On the morrow news reached him that all his own and his troop's baggage had been stolen by the townsfolk of Vernon from his quarters, which were three leagues away from the battlefield. He had left everything behind by the King's orders so that he might not be late in arriving for the combat. I had taken such pains in equipping him and had spent no small sum either foreseeing that he was likely to be long away. As a matter of fact he was nine whole months absent and he and his men suffered very much from the loss of their things.

M. de Buhy, his brother, and he together reduced Vernon to the King's obedience through the reliance which the inhabitants placed in them both, and this event did not a little to shake the confidence of the citizens of Mantes. Two days later Mantes opened its gates to the King.

It was there, at Mantes, that the King commanded M. du Plessis to enter his State Council and bade Marshal

de Biron to install him, to everyone's gratification. He took the oaths a few days later and was the first protestant to be admitted. I must not forget to add that he sent his valet, Daulay, a man from Buhy, from the battlefield to me with a message in a cipher agreed upon between us and that very evening he wrote me a full account of the victory. I sent the original on to the Marshal de Mâtignon who, directly he saw the handwriting, organized public rejoicings at Bordeaux, and these were followed by others all over the country.

CHAPTER XI

AN ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION

SOMETIME in the year 1597 the Sieur de Vernay, Lieutenant of the castle of Chinon, growing discontented, turned out the Lady de Chavigny, who acted as Governor of the town for her husband who was incapacitated by age and blindness, and made himself master in her stead. He agreed to hold the place under M. de la Trémoille and to allow the practice of the reformed religion in exchange for M. de la Trémoille's support. But on being reproached with his treating with the protestants he next had recourse to M. d'Epernon, and even took money from him. M. du Plessis, by the King's command, saw him and made him promise to give up all bargaining with private people and to depend only on the King, who confirmed him in the governorship. Out of this affair arose the attempted assassination of M. du Plessis by the Sieur de St Phal¹ at Angers. This M. de St Phal had some project for reinstating Madame de Chavigny, who was his aunt, in the governorship of Chinon. He used as his go-between a certain Moncenis who was seized near Mirabeau by some soldiers and the letters he carried were sent to M. du Plessis. M. du Plessis opened some of them just to see whether the bearer was a proper seizure or no, but he decided to set him free and gave him back his letters as soon as he saw they were signed by St Phal. His suspicions had certainly been

¹ Georges de Vaudray, Marquis de Saint Phal. His half-sister married Charles de Cossé, Marshal de Brissac. The family motto was "Y'ay valu, vaux et vaudray". 'Un plaisant ajouta "*rien*" a l'occasion de l'indigne conduite de St Phal' in regard to M. du Plessis. Lettres missives de Henri IV, iv, 875.

aroused but as he could not see his way clearly he said nothing to the King on the subject.

M. du Plessis was afterwards employed in the negotiations for the surrender of Brittany by the Duc de Mercœur. St Phal, who was brother-in-law to M. de Brissac, was in Angers when the treaty was arranged between Du Plessis, De Brissac and De Schomberg in that town.

The Marshal de Brissac, M. de Schomberg¹ and M. du Plessis spent the morning of the 28th of Oct. 1597 in a conference and at its close they all went to dine together with M. de Rochefort, the Governor of Angers. When M. du Plessis left the Governor's house to return to his own lodgings about two hours after noon, doubting nothing and almost unaccompanied, for his men were scattered about the town amusing themselves, he met M. de St Phal at the entrance to the little street. M. de St Phal told him he had something to say to him. M. du Plessis replied that he was ready to listen, whereupon M. de St Phal demanded to know why his letters had been opened, as was mentioned above. This occurrence had happened five months before. M. du Plessis explained the circumstances exactly as they happened and M. de St Phal seemed to be satisfied, as indeed he had reason. Notwithstanding this he repeated his complaints more forcibly, which is a proof that the deed was premeditated, and M. du Plessis told him twice over that if his explanation did not please him he would give him satisfaction when and how he liked in the way usual between gentlemen, leaving all arrangements to him. On this M. de St Phal took a step backwards and with a stick which he held hidden behind him struck M. du Plessis a blow on his bare head, for they had been speaking together hat in hand. The blow, striking his temple brought M. du Plessis to the ground, staggering as he felt for his sword. St Phal immediately ran for his horse leaving his servants

¹ Gaspard de Schomberg, b. 1540 in Saxony, but came young to France and was employed in important positions in the army by Henri III and in finance by Henri IV.

to finish the job. They lunged at M. du Plessis but partly his fall and partly the help given him by one of his servants saved him. He quickly got to his feet, sword in hand, but by that time St Phal had escaped, leaving his men to form a hedge right across the road to cover his flight and thus he reached the horse in waiting for him. M. de St Phal had ten or twelve men paid to do the job, besides several others hidden in the shops who ran up when the blow was struck; M. du Plessis had with him only Lugny, his squire, who was attacked from behind and knocked down, Brouard, his *maître d'hôtel*, who warded off several blows from his master before he fell himself, a clerk to a receiver of Saumur named Pilet and another young man named Dugeon, who chanced to be passing, both of whom set on St Phal's men and both of whom received sword cuts. The news immediately ran round the town that M. du Plessis was killed and the rumour even reached la Doutre, another certain proof that St Phal intended to assassinate him. But thanks to God he was but slightly hurt considering the blow, by which it is manifest that men can fail to kill even when they intend to do so and would seem to have the power to carry out their intention.

M. de Brissac,¹ M. de la Rochepot and M. d'Avaugour, all relatives of St Phal came that same evening to see M. du Plessis, all expressing their detestation of the villain and offering to punish him in whatever way M. du Plessis wished. He replied that the affair was too fresh for any decision to be made and that he must take counsel with his friends on the best course for him to pursue. The King's officials also came to see him to whom he said that they did not need to be told the duties of their charge; in truth his only wish was to get away from a place where he felt he was very unsafe. That same evening he sent Lenteuille and Pilet with a letter to me which he wrote with his own hand as soon as he knew

¹ Charles de Cossé, Duc and Maréchal de Brissac, Governor of Paris for the League, which city he sold to Henri IV 1594, m. Judith, sister of St Phal.

he was out of danger. They found me at Gien, still extremely weak with the palpitations brought on by the baths and the waters I had been taking. I was there to meet our son just home from his travels. The joy of meeting him was dimmed by this sad news. After giving God thanks I decided, in spite of my weakness, to get to Saumur as fast as possible so as to rejoin M. du Plessis while my son rode on before me. When my husband and I came together it seemed like being born again, he escaping, out of all likelihood, from assassination and I, contrary to all hope, from the tomb.

On the way from Angers to Saumur M. de Schomberg sent M. de la Bastide, Governor of Pont de Cé and the King's *maître d'hôtel ordinaire*, to His Majesty and he told the whole story of the attempt on M. du Plessis' life to the King. The King took the matter very much to heart and at once sent M. de la Bastide back to M. du Plessis with a letter written by himself in these very words: "that the injury was done to himself and that as his friend he would stake his life and his sword as freely as any other friend of his, but that as his King he would see that justice was done to his full satisfaction," and so forth. His Majesty told M. de Brissac to hand his prisoner over to M. Dauphin, *exempt* of his guard, so that he might be safely lodged in the Castle of Angers; for on the representations of M. de Schomberg M. de Brissac had arrested M. de St Phal, though rather to protect him from vengeance than to further the cause of justice. M. de Brissac shuffled out of complying with the King's orders, assuring His Majesty at the same time that he would answer for St Phal with his honour and his life. But instead of guarding him properly he lent him his house at la Guerche for a prison, whence he soon after escaped into Anjou to his own castle of Beaupréau, in the Mauges country.

This event rallied a number of good friends to M. du Plessis' side. The greater number of the chief nobles and all men of honour who were with His Majesty were

moved to horror by the infamy of the deed ; the *Cour de Parlement* expressed a wish that the criminal should be handed over to them to be made an example of ; and the King's own special servants in the Court, Messrs Servain and Mariou, were ready personally to beg the King to allow them to demand justice in his name. The members of the Assembly at Châtellerault,¹ both as a body and as representatives of their individual provinces, sent M. de Cases specially to condole with him and to offer him everything that lay in their power or in that of their provinces. They even sent important members of their body to the King to put their procedure before him in the right light. M. du Plessis contented himself with thanking them for their goodwill but declined their offers for fear of arousing jealousy. The principal protestant churches and towns did the same as the Assembly, especially the people of Rochelle, who offered to send a company of citizens with guns and ammunition to help him in anything he might choose to undertake. The Duke of Bouillon,² a Marshal of France, and M. de la Trémoille both of whom spoke of having the honour to be related to M. du Plessis, laid him under the deepest obligation by their offers of their own persons, of their friends and even of the troops they had in the field. M. de Châtillon, young as he was, did the same and the obligation was as great to his mother as to him ; neither were M. de Rohan and M. de Soubise³ more backward, for M. de Rohan even proposed to go to the King and demand justice in the name of all the kinsmen, for they recognized that M. du Plessis had the honour to be connected with their house both through his father and his mother. They were strengthened in their friendly offers by the affection which Mme de Rohan, their mother,

¹ An Assembly of delegates from the huguenot churches.

² Henri de la Tour, Vicomte de Turenne, Duc de Bouillon 1591.

³ Henri de Rohan, afterwards 1st Duc de Rohan, 1579-1638, Benjamin de Rohan, seigneur de Soubise, 1583-1642, sons of René de Rohan and Catherine de Parthenay, daughter and heiress of J. de Parthenay de Soubise. Catherine de Parthenay was an ardent calvinist.

had always shown us. The Princess of Orange¹ also took up his cause in memory of the good service M. du Plessis had always vowed to her late husband, and the friendship between them. She assured the King that every honourable man, without as well as within the realm was watching to see that justice was done. Among the nobles and gentry of the protestant religion, who showed their friendly feelings, were the Marquis of Gallerande, the Vidame de Chartres, Messrs de la Force,² de Parabère, de Montglat³ and a dozen more. Of the Catholic nobility M. de Montpensier did him the honour to offer his services, addressing him as a kinsman; Mme de Fontevrault,⁴ agreeably to her sex, showed the liveliest sympathy; the Constable wrote to him assuring him that he would see that justice was done, lost no opportunity of pressing the matter and followed it up to its conclusion. The Comte de Chiverny,⁵ the Chancellor, sent most friendly letters all the way to Saumur; M. d'Elbœuf,⁶ mindful of certain good turns which M. du Plessis had done him, took his revenge with such kindness as cannot be told; M. de Villeroi, Secretary of State, specially made the affair his own and omitted nothing friendship could demand. M. du Plessis had also good reason to feel obliged to Marshal Boisdauphin,⁷ and to the Governors of Poitou, Touraine, Rennes, de la Marche and Angers, to the Bishop of Bayeux and to many more catholic nobles and gentry of importance, one and all offering to do anything in their power. In especial

¹ Louise de Coligny, 4th wife of William, Prince of Orange, d. of Admiral Coligny.

² Jacques Nonpar de Caumont, Marquis de la Force, afterwards Duke, and Marshal of France, 1558-1652.

³ Robert de Harlay, baron de Montglat. His wife was afterwards 'gouvernante' to the children of Henri IV.

⁴ Eleanor de Bourbon, aunt to Henri IV, Abbess of Fontevrault.

⁵ Philippe Hurault, 1528-1599, Chancellor of France under Henri III and Henri IV.

⁶ Charles de Lorraine, Duc d'Elbœuf, son of René, 7th son of Claude, 1st Duc de Guise, d. 1609.

⁷ Urbain de Laval, marquis de Sablé, Marshal of France under the title of Maréchal de Boisdauphin. Fought for the League but later supported Henri IV.

M. de Malicorne, Governor of Poitou, who was seventy years old, offered to come with five hundred gentlemen, all friends of his. I tell all these things not from vanity but because our son ought to know to whom we are under obligation so that he may return the kindness to them and theirs. Nor ought I to forget Mme d'Avaugour, St Phal's aunt. She sent a gentleman for the express purpose of telling M. du Plessis how much she detested the deed and to protest that she preferred his friendship and his kindredship above the near relationship of his opponent, and that if her sex allowed she would like to be in at the vengeance. Among our near relatives those who took the matter most to heart were M. de Buhy, M. du Plessis' elder brother (whom God took to Himself before the cause was settled); the Archbishop of Rheims,¹ his uncle, the Bishop of St Malo² and M. de Vardes, his first cousins, M. de Mouy, although he served under St Phal, and many others of our kindred. So far as men of Law were concerned there were Forget de Blancmesnil and de Thou,³ presidents of the court, du Bouchet, president of the *Chambre des Comptes* and Messrs de Fresne and de Guere, secretaries of State. His kinswoman, the Maréchale de Retz,⁴ promised her husband's friendship and the personal help of her son.

M. du Plessis was bewildered between the varied advice and his own honour and conscience, but resolved to do nothing to satisfy the first to the prejudice of the second. So as to do everything with ripe consideration after hearing the advice of his nearest kinsmen he begged M. de Pierrefitte first to go to His Majesty with his humble thanks for the honour he had done him and then to summon a family council to determine on the proper course to pursue. Those who followed the profession of

¹ Philippe de Bec, Archbishop of Rheims, 1598-1608. He was appointed to the see by Henri IV in 1594 but could not take possession till 1598.

² Jean de Bec, Bishop of St Malo, 1599-1610. He was made Bishop of Nantes in 1594 and exchanged it for St Malo.

³ Jacques Auguste de Thou, 3rd son of Christophe de Thou, the historian.

⁴ Catherine de Clermont Tonnerre, m. Albert de Gondi, Maréchal de Retz.

arms advised a recourse to arms, not by a challenge of which they all agreed St Phal had rendered himself unworthy, but by some act of violence which his conduct had made permissible. Those who followed the profession of justice preferred a recourse to justice for an act in which honour had no part, being in fact an attempt at assassination and therefore to be judged as a crime, a course which would certainly make a striking example of the culprit. But although the path of justice could not be followed without renouncing the path of honour it was decided to choose the former, provided that the King would consent to be made a party to the cause; and to secure His Majesty's consent the whole family were to petition him for justice with the exception of M. du Plessis, who would thus be left free to follow the other path should God furnish an opportunity. It was M. du Plessis' intention to seize St Phal by any possible means either in his own house or wherever else he might be, and having got hold of him to hand him over unhurt to the King since His Majesty had made the quarrel his own; and M. du Plessis was ready to declare himself satisfied if once St Phal's life and honour were in his hands without doing him any hurt at all. The family council decided that M. de Rosny¹ was to present its petition to the King, backed by all the kinsmen, but M. de Rosny and M. de Fresne, although they agreed with the rest, thought it would be better to ascertain the King's wishes first. These two gentlemen therefore promised to speak with His Majesty. The King's opinion was not favourable for he replied that the deed itself and the high merit of the victim touched him too nearly for any petition to be needed, and he would see such justice done as would content the whole clan.

At this date M. du Plessis had three regiments under him commanded by three of his friends. Besides these

¹ Maximilien de Bethune, Marquis de Rosny, afterwards Duc de Sully, 1560-1641, m. in 1592 Rachel de Vaucelas, daughter of Mlle du Plessis' sister. Her first husband was Fr. Hurault de Chateaupers.

troops numbers of the nobility offered help and the Dukes of Bouillon and la Trémoille asked for nothing better than to come to his assistance. Artillery and ammunition were not lacking and he could easily have invested St Phal in his house of Beaupréau and have done what justice he pleased on him. One consideration only restrained him. A great deal of bad feeling had been stirred up between people of both religions by the Assembly at Châtellerault. If he were to take the field, supported by all the principal lords of the religion to which he belonged, all those of the contrary religion would believe, or at least pretend to believe, that there was a general uprising and they would at once seize their arms too. Thus the State would be disturbed on his private account and he would have no certainty of being able to pacify it again. The fact that his troops would eat the country bare if he were to fight for his own private ends also weighed with him. He did, however, consent that our son should try to capture St Phal's house by petard or assault but he made him and the captains who went with him swear to do St Phal no hurt, but to bring him back prisoner if they possibly could. After all St Phal got a warning from Saumur in time to escape, for he had already arranged to take a long journey as a cloak for his real purpose. There is no great difficulty in guessing who gave him the warning.

In the month of January 1598 M. de Buhy, M. du Plessis' elder brother, died in his own house. He was seized with a violent attack of apoplexy while out hunting and had already had two similar attacks. We felt his loss even in the state we were in. The King wrote a letter of condolence to M. du Plessis saying that his own loss was not less than ours. M. de Buhy had been promised the governorship of either Calais or Nantes, whichever town was the first to acknowledge obedience to the King and His Majesty confirmed this promise with warm expressions of regret when he passed through Saumur. Unhappily it was not found possible to secure

either his existing appointments nor his future preferment for his twelve-year-old son.

[After peace was made with Spain the Duke of Mercœur surrendered the Duchy of Brittany and agreed to give his only child in marriage to the King's natural son Cæsar.]

On the marriage of Cæsar, the son of the King and the Duchess of Beaufort, His Majesty gave him the Duchy of Vendôme as a wedding present with the consent of Mme Catherine, Duchess of Bar. Now it should be noted that this Duchy was the principal possession of the house of Navarre, of which M. du Plessis was the *surintendant*; nevertheless he was never consulted on the gift nor had anything whatever to do with it. No doubt His Majesty feared that he would make, because of his very fidelity, some remonstrance on the subject. So he was only summoned with the rest of the Council when everything had been settled by the President Jeanin¹ and two notaries simply to hear the deed read aloud before the parties, and again when it was presented to Madame, the King's sister, for her agreement.

While the King was at Angers as St Phal refused to appear, and his brother-in-law, the Marshal de Brissac, pretended that he was unable to hand him over to the King as was his duty, a commission was sent to the court of Parliament directing that he should be brought to trial, with orders to the *procureurs* and the *avocats généraux* to see that justice was done. The crime was described as lying in ambush. The Court of Parliament sent the commission on to the *Lieutenant Général* of Tours for further information. Whereupon the members of our family bestirred themselves, more especially M. de Mouy, who was related to both parties but who was M. du Plessis' particular friend. He felt it a hard thing to have his arms and his house dishonoured in the

¹ Pierre Jeanin, 1540-1622, celebrated statesman, employed first by the League and afterwards frequently employed by Henri IV in important affairs of State.

person of St Phal. He sounded M. du Plessis in every possible way, first at Angers and then at Nantes, but as he could not find that he was in any way in fault the King commanded the Marshals of France to meet. As the result of their deliberations some sort of agreement was reached on the proper reparation to be made by St Phal to M. du Plessis. While this conference of the Marshals was being held M. du Plessis begged His Majesty to give him leave of absence, which was granted in a very friendly way. He went to Saumur whither the Maréchal de Bouillon,¹ his very particular friend, followed him to see if he were willing to agree to the terms drawn up by the aforesaid conference. But on reading it he asked M. de Pierrefitte to go to the King at Rennes and lay before him his objections to it. The *Lieutenant Général* of Tours, roused by the infamy of the deed, made very careful inquiries and examined several witnesses. Others were examined at Rennes and all the evidence was sent to the record office of the *Cours de Parlement* of Paris, where it can be seen and is more than enough to prove the assassination and send the culprit to the scaffold. All this was done without any interference on the part of M. du Plessis. These proceedings were postponed on the King's return to Paris on the assurance of St Phal's family that he would give himself up to justice if they were allowed to drop entirely, but only on condition that they would be pursued if he failed to obey within a limited time.

On the 15th of April in this same year 1598, at two o'clock in the afternoon Philippe de la Verrie was born at Saumur, whither my daughter,² his mother, had come to be near me, for she and her husband wanted our help in certain business matters. M. du Plessis followed the King, on his return from Rennes, as far as Bourdaisières near Tours. Here, by the King's desire he and M. de

¹ Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Duc and Maréchal de Bouillon.

² Susanne de Pas, d. of Mlle du Plessis' first husband, m. M. de la Verrie 1597.

Villeroi, the Secretary of State, examined the treaty with Spain, which was ratified on their report.

He soon returned to Saumur, promising the King to rejoin him whenever he was sent for. A long time went by before any summons came, partly because St Phal would not move until he was assured that he would not be brought to trial, and partly because, when the assurance was given, St Phal abused it and went about Paris quite openly. It was only when M. du Plessis sent a serious complaint to the King that the culprit was at last sent as a prisoner to his own house of St Phal in Champagne, in the charge of two officers of justice. M. du Plessis had told the King through M. de Chesnaye, a gentleman-in-waiting who had been sent to summon him to court, that he could expect no good result from such a beginning, since his opponent was allowed to go about Paris armed, a sure argument that he could expect no real satisfaction if even the mere decencies of conduct were not insisted on. The King took this complaint to heart and the officer in charge of St Phal was nearly cashiered. Soon after the King was ordered a course of treatment and the whole affair was postponed till the winter. All these comings and goings occupied the whole time between June and the end of October.

M. du Plessis was most unwilling to rejoin His Majesty before St Phal was sent to the Bastille. The King promised that he should be sent there but not before M. du Plessis had arrived at Court, for fear lest the prisoner should be left to languish too long. And things being in this position M. du Plessis was advised by his kinsmen not to set out. At length they counselled him to come, but strictly on the King's business and not on his own, for he was wanted on account of certain difficulties which had arisen in the affairs of the Religion and also to conclude the marriage-contract of Madame, the King's sister. So he came to St Germain en Laye where the Court was, accompanied only by M. de Villarnoul to whom our eldest daughter was contracted, the Sieur de

Nesde, *maître de camp*, and the Sieur de la Ferrière, standard-bearer of his troop and commandant of Veziens. He would bring no more followers for he had no wish to come attended by a crowd while his opponent was a prisoner in the hands of justice. His Majesty did him the honour to send his private secretary, M. du Morier, to meet him at Meulan with a letter saying how glad the King was that he was on his way and promising him all he could ask from a good master. So he saw the King at St Germain on Dec. 20, 1598 and was very well received by him and all the lords at court and his own friends. Several days passed without mention of his own private affairs but plenty was said about the King's business. In particular he was employed with the Duke of Bouillon to soothe the opposition of the clergy to the Edict given to the protestants (Edict of Nantes), as well as the objections raised by the legal officers of the Crown to its verification, and finally to arrange with the Court of Parliament the modifications which that body wished to introduce into it. In spite of all these obstacles by dint of the King's prudence and dexterity, and especially by the excellent alternatives to certain expressions which were suggested to him, the Edict was simply verified without having recourse to the authority of the King's personal presence, which might have been construed as the use of force on his part; for His Majesty was convinced that it was better to gain his end step by step, through argument, than by the use of authority, a procedure which would have been prejudicial to the Edict and would have rendered its acceptance more difficult. It is undoubtedly true that the Edict as verified is weaker than when it was drawn up at Nantes, but not much nor in matters of importance. The two chief differences are these: the first, that the six protestant councillors who ought to form part of the *Chambre de l'Edict* at Paris were scattered among the other *Chambres* (and it should be noted that this point had been conceded before M. du Plessis left Saumur); the second, that the national synods could

only be held with His Majesty's permission. The King was pleased to write to M. du Plessis, when he remonstrated on the point, that he would see that the protestants were satisfied. And if the meeting at Châtellerault could have believed it, no special article was needed, because the general article, allowing the exercise and discipline of the protestant Church, would have covered all they required.

At last St Phal was brought prisoner to Paris and immediately lodged in the Bastille, his sword being taken from him by M. de la Force, Captain of the Guard. This was on the 12th January 1599. At the same time a courier was sent to Buhy, where M. du Plessis was, commanding his attendance. In the meantime the Constable,¹ the Marshals of France and the most notable among the Chevaliers had met to arrange the business, watched over by M. de Vardes, our first cousin, to see that nothing was done to M. du Plessis' prejudice. As he saw that things were all as they should be (and he was very punctilious not only for himself but for his friends no less), he wrote to tell M. du Plessis that he need not hesitate to come to Paris. As soon as M. du Plessis arrived he invited all his chief friends and his nearest relatives who were in the city at the time to his lodgings. When they were assembled he asked them to give their opinion, with due regard to his honour and their own, on the form of reconciliation which had been proposed to him. They one and all approved of it, declaring that in a like case they would none of them refuse a similar form and that were a Prince the offended party he could ask for no fuller a satisfaction. The said form of procedure and apology was couched in the following terms:

"The Constable and the Marshals of France are to present themselves before the King and to inform him that they have examined into everything that passed between M. du Plessis and M. de St Phal; that they find that M. de St Phal has deeply offended His Majesty,

¹ See introduction.

and deserves punishment ; and that he cannot meet M. du Plessis in combat because the nature of his crime disqualifies him. Furthermore, since M. de St Phal's family has already implored His Majesty for pardon, the Constable is to say that this prayer has been repeated over again to him, and that he joins his own supplication to those of M. de St Phal's family for His Majesty's permission to present M. de St Phal to him so that the culprit may implore pardon on his knees for his offence.

"When St Phal presents himself before His Majesty he is to kneel on the ground and humbly beg pardon for the fault he has committed. He will beg to be allowed to apologise to M. du Plessis in the King's presence. Then he is to rise and say to M. du Plessis the following words : ' Sir, I have reason to believe that you have reported certain facts to His Majesty, which might make him doubt the loyalty which I owe him as his very faithful servant. These facts are as follows : that when you were at Angers, after having dined together at M. de Rochepot's lodgings, I saw you leave attended by only four men, and that I followed you a few minutes later better accompanied than you were and was joined by more of my men in the street outside ; having caught you up I asked you to clear up a question between us. You answered courteously and offered to give me the satisfaction usual between men of honour, which offer should have contented me. But the belief that you had wronged me had such power over me that it clouded my mind, and drove me to do you the injury which I had already planned to do you. Seizing a stick, which I had hidden behind me out of your sight, I gave you a blow which felled you to the ground. I ran immediately for my horse while my servants, sword in hand, attacked yours who were endeavouring to defend you. I confess that I deliberately attacked you and with such advantage on my side as no man of honour could think of employing. For all which things I beg your forgiveness and will submit to receive a like blow to the one I gave you.

At the same time I implore you to intercede for me to the King so that he may stay the course of justice and avert the punishment I deserve for having so unworthily injured a gentleman of your quality, a Councillor of State who was in the exercise of a commission of the highest importance. In return I shall for ever be your friend and servant, assuring you that had a like chance happened to me I should feel I had received full satisfaction.'

"M. du Plessis shall thereupon humbly implore the King to pardon M. de St Phal and shall declare that, so far as he himself was concerned, he would have gladly secured satisfaction by a different way. The King shall then do M. du Plessis the honour to say that he had always held that M. St Phal's conduct neither could nor ought to be avenged by a recourse to arms; and this being so he considered that M. de St Phal's submission was sufficient reparation for the wrong he had done and that M. du Plessis ought to be satisfied with it. He felt this all the more strongly because it was most essential that all quarrels between his servants should be settled, especially between those of so much importance. As for the crime against himself he would consider what should be done about that later on.

"M. du Plessis shall thereupon say to M. St Phal that since it was the King's pleasure and also since the Constable and the Marshals of France were all agreed that proper satisfaction had been given him, he pardoned him at His Majesty's command. The King shall then do M. St Phal the honour to say that he also pardoned him at M. du Plessis' request, at the same time blaming his conduct and bidding him take care not to offend again in a like manner."

Everything being thus arranged on the following day M. de la Force, the Captain of the Guard, brought M. St Phal, unarmed, into the King's presence. Throwing himself upon his knees at the King's feet before all the Princes and nobles then at Court M. St Phal read aloud

the above apology. Most of those who had formed M. du Plessis' family council were present. They did not accompany M. du Plessis however, but each arrived by himself because M. du Plessis would not come to meet a bound man escorted by his friends. It should be noted that when the question was raised as to whether M. St Phal should wear his sword whilst making his apologies, His Majesty ordered that he should appear before him unarmed, but that having begged for pardon and for leave to apologise to M. du Plessis his sword should be restored. The reason for this was that His Majesty was of opinion that it was more in accordance with M. du Plessis' honour for apologies to be made by an armed rather than by an unarmed man. It was enough that, by appearing unarmed before the King, the prisoner acknowledged himself unworthy to bear arms until his right to them was restored by the King's clemency. A legal document was drawn up and signed by His Majesty and countersigned by M. de Villeroi, Secretary of State, which expressly stated that "St Phal was granted a pardon for the crime of lying in ambush," etc. It should not be forgotten that the sentence as described above having been carried out in every particular, His Majesty rebuked St Phal in the following terms. I repeat his very words.

"That he, an inexperienced man ought to be ashamed to attack an old Knight, one who had distinguished himself in many fights and in four pitched battles, who had won fame in the service of his King, who had filled some of the first positions of command, and who, nevertheless, had offered to meet him as a man of honour. However, he (the King) would pardon him on account of his youth and at M. du Plessis' own request, but that if anyone behaved in a like manner in the future he (the King) would make a signal example of the culprit."

As this attack on M. du Plessis had been much noised abroad, both within and without the realm, M. du Plessis sent a copy of the apology to all his friends and

especially to the deputies from the Churches at that time sitting at Châtellerault. The ambassadors also all asked to see it and he received congratulations on every side. It should be noted that the apology was signed by the Constable and all the Marshals who had sat in judgment, especially by the Marshal de Brissac, St Phal's brother-in-law, who has since done everything in his power to be friendly with M. du Plessis. M. du Plessis also felt much indebted to M. de la Force for his behaviour in the last scene. But after all it was the Constable and the Duke of Bouillon who really carried the matter through. The King proved his good will the whole time by saying a word in favour of the wronged party whenever he thought it useful, although he had steadily refused to allow St Phal to be proceeded against by law, an action which would have covered him with disgrace.

CHAPTER XII

FAMILY EVENTS : 1590-1605

AT the end of 1590 some very sad news reached us for my mother Dame Magdeleine Chavalier, Mlle de la Borde, died on the last day of December in that year. She had suffered much from the cruelty of the times for her house at Esprunes had been pillaged more than once. After she had lain ill at Melun for four months she had herself carried to her house at Vignau where she rendered her soul to God. She had never professed herself a protestant but she was not ignorant that there were many abuses in the Roman Church and she would gladly have seen it reformed. She left two executors to her will, M. Guy Arbaleste, sieur de la Borde who is my eldest brother, and M. Pierre Morin de Paroi, the late Chancellor de L'Hôpital's brother-in-law. She left 600 crowns to my daughter, Susanne de Pas, in memory of the days when she had had charge of the child. Four months later our sorrow was grievously renewed by the death of Dame Françoise de Bec, Mlle de Buhy, M. du Plessis' mother, who loved us all dearly. Up to her last breath she showed her zeal and love for our religion. She was assisted on her death-bed by M. du Buisson, a minister of the Gospel, who is also known by the name of Viau. He has often testified that he never met anyone who was more willing to leave this world or more assured of salvation in Jesus Christ. Her death obliged us to send to Mantes to fetch our youngest child, Anne, which involved a most perilous journey. This daughter of ours had been brought up by my mother-in-law who loved her dearly up to her last breath. She left her a legacy as well as one to my son. Her body was taken to

Buhy to be buried by the side of her husband. Our tears at her loss are not dried even at the date I write, and I pray God keep the rest of the family in His mercy. . . . During the siege of Rouen in 1591 M. du Plessis was sent over to England. The reason for this journey was as follows. The King sometime previously had recruited four thousand foot-soldiers in England all of whom were stricken with sickness owing to the postponement of the siege till winter had set in. His Majesty had warning that the Duke of Parma and the Spaniards were on their way and thought it would be impossible to carry on the siege as well as meet them in the field if the army was not reinforced with infantry. In any case he had need of foot-soldiers to carry out the assault on the town, for up to this time he had got no further than Fort St Catherine just for lack of men. He determined therefore to beg the Queen of England for further assistance and selected M. du Plessis for the mission. M. du Plessis did what he could to excuse himself not omitting to point out to the King that the threads of the treaty of peace might be broken through his absence, but it was all in vain. The King had the success of the siege very much at heart and reckoned that the journey would occupy much less time than was possible. M. du Plessis set out from Rouen on the last day of December, embarked at Dieppe and reached England on New Year's Day 1592. He was well received and had the great pleasure of meeting his old friends once again. But the negotiation proved inconceivably difficult although the chief nobles owned that his requests were most reasonable, necessary, dangerous to refuse and if they were refused would bring ruin on the King of France and imperil themselves. But no arguments could move the Queen from her determination that no more soldiers should go to France for she feared that their dispatch would furnish the Earl of Essex, Commander of the English troops, with an excuse for staying abroad. She, on the contrary, was trying, at any cost, to get him back, by bribes, by

persuasion, by threats of disgrace, all because he was the person she loved best in the whole world and for whom she most dreaded danger. This was the true reason of her refusals and delays although she gave others such as the small regard in which her advice and her troops had been held because Rouen had not been besieged earlier in the year. In short M. du Plessis found the only possible cure for he knew what the true malady was. He replied to all the Queen's avowed reasons for her refusal while at the same time he persuaded the King to apply the only possible remedy, to wit, pacifying her by sending the Earl home to England. Once this was done reinforcements were at once embarked although it is very true that they would have been of much greater use if they had been sent sooner. This journey took six weeks, three of which were spent at Dover waiting for a favourable wind.

During his stay in England the quarrel with the puritans (as those who abhorred the ceremonies retained in the English Church were called) came to its height. Certain people so excited the Queen's feelings against them that she actually meditated starting a persecution. The Bishop of Winchester, one Thomas Cooper, grand almoner to Her Majesty, discussed the matters in dispute with M. du Plessis. M. du Plessis did much to soften the bishop's anger by insisting that we should bear with our brother in matters of indifference to the extreme length to which charity bade us go, so long as we did nothing to prejudice our faith. Even after M. du Plessis had returned to France the bishop wrote to him on the subject and sent him the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England set out in sixteen tables. They were accompanied by several books written both for and against these articles and the bishop begged M. du Plessis to give an opinion on the whole question. A paper of some length, written in latin, can be seen among M. du Plessis' papers although he excused himself from writing more amply because the fighting was getting lively.

It looked as if his letter bore fruit for soon after this the puritans were left alone again. . . .

On his return to Saumur, 1592, M. du Plessis was extremely pleased to find the *temple*, had nearly reached completion during his absence, owing to my continual efforts, and without costing the church in Saumur a farthing. He had previously been obliged to pull down the buildings where the preachings used to be held, and had hired the city tennis court at a rent of one crown and a half for each service, whilst the new building was being erected on a site specially bought for the purpose near the Pont du Bourg. He found the building so far advanced that very soon after his return the preachings were transferred to it. I may observe that this was not at all to the liking of his enemies because they had fully expected him to seize on one of the churches meant for the use of Roman Catholics, which could have been made an occasion for scandal and complaints. But instead of doing as they expected he had had the patience and the enterprise to build a new *temple*, altogether. He also found that the new town fortifications had not made less progress than the *temple*, during his absence, at any rate considering the small means at our disposal.

In 1594 the King made up his mind to make profession of the catholic faith, as every one knows. The views of M. du Plessis on the subject, which he expressed very freely, can be seen among his papers. In spite of this the King continued to urge M. du Plessis to come to court before the deputies from the churches met at Saumur, and he therefore decided to go to Châtres in September. His Majesty was just as friendly and told him all about his affairs just as freely as ever. Indeed he shut himself up in his chamber alone with M. du Plessis for three whole hours to tell him all that had happened and show him exactly what had moved him to take this step. The long and short of it all was that he had found himself on the very brink of a precipice through the

intrigues of some of his own followers, whose names he mentioned, and saw that his only chance of escape lay in his conversion. But besides this he also said that the huguenots had not stood by him as they ought. However, he should always regard the reformed faith and those who professed it just as he had always done and he hoped God would have mercy on him. It was abundantly clear that he was filled with a belief which made his conduct excusable, namely, that the differences between the two faiths were only important because of the bitterness of the preachers, and that he believed that some day by his own authority he could settle the quarrel between them.

M. du Plessis pointed out by plain reasoning that this could only be done by the establishment of the King's authority coupled with the abolition of the Pope's power in the Gallican Church. . . .

Early in 1596 M. du Plessis decided to make our principal home in the Castle of Saumur because he had been warned that some of the townspeople and other bad neighbours were plotting to seize him and make themselves masters of the castle. This move was most difficult and costly for the place was all in ruins. Some two months after our establishment there I began to suffer more acutely from my usual catarrh and I even feared the loss of my sight. I felt my eyes growing constantly weaker, although I saved them all I could as I always have done. I spared no remedy, living in constant terror lest I should be deprived of my only consolation in reading the Holy Scriptures. God will restore good sight to me if it is His will and if not He will Himself be my consolation through His Holy Spirit.

A General Synod of the churches was held in the springtime of this year at Saumur, in the hall of our lodgings in the Town Hall which we had retained for the use of our friends after we had moved into the Castle. M. de la Touche presided over it and many well-known people came to it, among others M. Merlin and M. de Serres.

In 1597 M. de la Verrie presented himself as a suitor for our daughter de Martinsart (Susanne de Pas). He is a gentleman from Maine of good family and of moderate means. She was betrothed to him on the 6th June. Something was also said about our other daughters by M. de la Trémoille and Mme de Rohan. Our chief wish is, God knows, that they should wed men brought up in His fear. Mme de Rohan spoke of a possible marriage between our son and the eldest daughter of the late M. de Châtillon, the late Admiral Coligny's son. She wrote to Mme de Châtillon on the subject and received a favourable answer.

Towards the end of July 1598, whilst the affair of St Phal was in progress, M. du Plessis published his book on the Institution of the Holy Eucharist. It is unbelievable how it upset people, especially the clergy. Some of his friends wanted him to print it anonymously, but, although he was well aware of the hatred he would excite, he considered that the book would be more widely read if he put his name to it and thereby would better serve to throw light on the truth. The Cardinal de Medici, at that time the Pope's Legate in France, who was on the eve of departure, took six copies with him to Italy. The Jesuits of Bordeaux demanded that the book should be forbidden and burnt by the *Parlement* of that town. They were told by M. Daffiz, the Premier President, that such things were no longer done but since they wished to defend the Fathers he advised them to write an answer to it. Whereupon the Jesuits divided the work between them so as to get through the labour. Boulenger, the King's almoner, attacked the preface with as much boldness as impudence and in order to discredit M. du Plessis declared most of the passages cited by him to be falsified. M. du Plessis wrote and printed his answer to this attack before he left Saumur. The most noise against it was made by the preachers from their pulpits, and especially by those of Paris during Lent, for in that city they never refrain from preaching sedition.

There they did their utmost to excite the populace both against him and his book. In spite of them M. du Plessis used no circumspection in his talk while he was in Paris, just to show that he was quite ready to defend what he had written. In the matter of his citations from the Fathers which were said to be incorrect he offered to prove them within two days if the doctors and professors of Paris would draw up a list of the disputed passages. But they all excused themselves saying that they were prevented by certain rules and regulations and that the Bishop of Paris¹ had forbidden them to do any such thing. They went further than this, however, because at their prayer a letter came from Rome in which the Pope complained of the book whose author had dared, although he was one of the King's most intimate servants and councillors, to speak of the Pope as Antichrist. On this certain people pointed out the probable consequences to the King, chiefly because he had every reason to cultivate the Pope's goodwill both to unmarry him as well as to marry him again, matters which lay very close to the King's heart.

In spite of these representations His Majesty never said a word to him about it or showed him any less friendliness, although it may very well have been the reason why he employed him less frequently in his affairs. The only thing His Majesty said was that he was sorry he could not keep him as near to his person as he would have liked. The King sent M. de la Force, Captain of his Guards, a very accomplished gentleman and M. du Plessis' very good friend, to discuss the publication of his book with him. M. du Plessis' answer was that he had done nothing without full consideration and had been quite aware of the possible results of his action, but that the King could be his witness that he had always ordered his life for God's service first and then for his King's and his friends'. He was not ignorant that his behaviour might rob him of worldly honour nor should he have

¹ Henri, Cardinal de Gondi.

any reason to be surprised if it did, but God's word never failed him who gave honour to those who honoured God. Further, he had put his name to his book not from motives either of ambition or vanity, for the price paid for such things was too high, but solely that the truth might be more eagerly read and accepted. To conclude, if the King really intended, as was his duty, to cleanse the church from abuses it was time that the Truth was made known and His Majesty ought to be glad that the soil was tilled ready for the seed. He very affectionately begged M. de la Force to carry his answer back to the King.

. . . . [The year 1599 found M. du Plessis still at court having stayed on for the marriage of the King's sister to the Duc de Bar.]

M. du Plessis took leave of His Majesty at Fontainebleau a few days before Easter to return to Saumur. Although the King's project for a marriage with the Duchess of Beaufort¹ was nearly ripe yet not a word was said on the subject to M. du Plessis. On every other matter His Majesty spoke very intimately, keeping none of his other affairs hidden from him and treating him in the same way as he had always done. But although confidential in some matters the King never spoke of his love affairs to M. du Plessis, feeling he could not count on his approval. Before leaving court M. du Plessis obtained the King's consent to our son's going to Holland to learn how to serve his country. M. du Plessis did not ask for a commission because he wished to leave himself free to recall the boy at any time he liked. Our son started directly after the wedding of his sister, our eldest daughter, to Jean de Jaucourt, eldest son of the house of Villarnoul. ✓ This wedding was celebrated at Saumur on April 14th, 1599. The family of Villarnoul was very well known in Burgundy as an old, well connected, and well born family but owing to its profession of the reformed religion as well as to the misery of the times it did not occupy any very important position. We had the happiness at this

¹ Gabrielle d'Estrées.

same time of knowing that my younger brother (now M. de la Borde in place of my elder brother who was dead), had declared himself a professor of the true faith from which he had fallen in the year 1572 at the general scattering of our churches. It was a singular consolation to me to see the blessing of God re-enter our family through His Holy Word.

M. du Plessis had hardly reached home when the news of the Duchess of Beaufort's death reached us. It was truly a judgment of God in mercy to the King and Kingdom, who thus escaped the evil which all wise men foresaw and which no wisdom could avert. Some people urged M. du Plessis to write a letter of sympathy to His Majesty immediately the news came but he was unable to say anything which would please the King and yet would not outrage his own conscience. So he merely wrote to M. de Loménie¹ to inquire after His Majesty's health for he feared it might suffer through his grief.

On the 29th September, Brouard, our *maître d'hôtel* whom we had sent to accompany our son, returned from Holland to Saumur. He brought us news especially how our son had been at the siege of Dorcum with Count William of Nassau. The town ought to have been taken and the country thereby enlarged had it been God's will to leave it in our hands. On the 6th October M. du Plessis travelled by post to Paris. I was determined to follow him with all our household in spite of my usual ill-health. My son and daughter de la Verrie had already gone to their own home to look after their own affairs, mainly on account of an estate which my daughter had bought with the dowry we had given her on her marriage. They took their little son with them and left their daughter out at nurse near Saumur, where I could keep a watch over her. M. du Plessis followed the King to Fontainebleau so soon as he reached Paris. He noticed

¹ Antoine de Loménie, Seigneur de la Villeaux Clercs, 1560-1638, Secretary to the King and later Secretary of State.

a certain coldness in the King's manner which he put down to his regret that he could not treat him as he used to do for fear of giving offence to the catholic party. M. du Plessis made up his mind to take no notice of the change but to make at least one effort to secure some provision for our family. With this object in view I and all our household left home on the 12th Oct. and reached Paris on the 22nd. Our hope was that we might, without worry or delay, get our affairs finally settled, whilst God gave us life, so that we might leave our children some certain if small fruit from our past labours. As for settling at Court M. du Plessis neither intended nor wished to do so, and those who were jealous of his doing so did very wrong in stirring up ill-will against him instead of simply hastening his departure, as they could easily have done by expediting his business.¹ Our son and daughter de Villarnoul accompanied us to Paris. Soon after we arrived our son came back from Holland for winter had put a stop to the war. He saw the King and told him all that had passed in Holland and His Majesty appeared to form a high opinion of him. Our expenses were very heavy with so large a household but they would have been still heavier if we had kept up two households; besides it would have been very difficult for M. du Plessis to have looked after me if I had stayed on at Saumur for my frequent illnesses were a constant source of anxiety to him. Even on my way to Paris I had several attacks which made me think I might die. A few months after reaching Paris I fell very ill with an illness of the liver on the top of all my other troubles. I owe my recovery to M. Marescot, under God, who, contrary to the general custom, bled me and gave me instant relief. The King's chief doctor, M. de la Ribière, had been to see me shortly before and had looked into my case, but he was not very attentive and moreover came but rarely, and so it chanced that when I was recovering from this last illness I took some of the pills he had given me (without further

¹ This is aimed at M. de Rosny, later Duc de Sully.

advice). They had such an effect on the cause of the complaint that they brought on fainting fits in such quick succession that I was brought very near to death. As a result of this unfortunate occurrence he was sent for and came hurrying in. God turned it all for the best for not only did the doctor relieve my immediate ailment but he also from this moment made it a duty to attend to me. Indeed he so turned his mind on to my condition that he wrote a treatise describing the symptoms, the remedies and the proper diet which he gave to me. This treatise has been approved and admired by all the most learned doctors in the kingdom.

As a favour to M. du Plessis the King had made my son, de la Verrie, a gentleman-in-waiting and we now obtained a like favour for our son de Villarnoul. He was sworn in by the Marshal de Biron, first gentleman of the bedchamber, and began his service at once. Sometime after, when the edict for the pacification of Burgundy was to be put in force, the King appointed him as one of the Commissioners. This appointment took him into his own country in company with M. de Volé, *maître des requêtes*. He did his work to the satisfaction of the King and Council as also of the churches.

M. du Plessis managed to do this much for our family but his credit was at a very low ebb as regards himself. It can be truthfully said that during his whole stay in Paris the King never employed him in any affairs of state although occasions offered. It was thought strange by even important men of the contrary religion that he was not included among those who were selected to carry through the negotiations with the Duke of Savoy over the Marquisate of Saluces. The presence of the Nuncio and the Patriarch in Paris, both of whom reiterated as occasion served the Pope's dislike of M. du Plessis, furnished the King with a reason for not employing him, but it would have been kinder to have asked him to absent himself for a time, and, so as to facilitate his withdrawal, to have hastened the settlement of the business which

detained him in Paris. This business was the presentment of claims for money advanced by M. du Plessis for the King's service and allowed by the *Chambre des Comptes* of Paris. His sole duty was to sit on the Council, chiefly when questions arising from the Edict of Nantes came up for decision which for the most part were left for him and the Chancellor to settle without calling in further advice. The rest of his time he gave to our private affairs. M. de Rosny's harshness, alike in things just and unjust, was a constant annoyance to him. It was all the worse because the fact that M. de Rosny had married our niece ought to have made him more considerate, especially as he had succeeded to a post formerly held by M. du Plessis. But jealousy which has no foundation ignores all claims.

Very soon a change came over the King not only in regard to M. du Plessis, but to all who professed the reformed religion. His Majesty even took trouble gladly to turn the gentlemen in attendance on him from their faith, telling them plainly that he could do nothing for their advancement so long as they remained outside the Catholic Church.

[M. du Plessis remained entirely out of favour at Court. He busied himself with his governorship of Saumur, with his duties as *surintendant* of Navarre and, above all, with the affairs of the huguenot Church. His son, growing up, was fretting for employment. In 1605 his chance seemed at last to be coming. Henri IV's difficulties with the Duke of Bouillon (Turenne) made it advisable to conciliate such leaders of the huguenot party as du Plessis.]

In January 1605 a letter came from M. de Rosny to M. du Plessis. It summoned our son to Paris by the King's command, as a regiment was to be raised for service in the Low Countries to which he was to be appointed. The matter, however, was to be kept secret. M. du Plessis wrote to our son, who was in Paris, that he must present himself as soon as possible. His Majesty told

him that he intended to raise three regiments in the spring of which he was to have one. Our son immediately began to think over those whom he should like to serve under him, and gentlemen and captains of the highest quality offered themselves on every side. But after all the scheme was given up. The Spanish ambassador protested that if anything of the sort was attempted his master would declare war on the very next day, while the Nuncio said that the Pope had guaranteed the peace, which he himself had made, between the two Kings. Moreover, just at this time Pope Clement VIII died. He was succeeded by the Cardinal of Florence, under the name of Leo IX,¹ on whose election (unheard of in France hitherto!) fireworks were let off and salutes fired from the Arsenal. Leo IX lived but a few days, to the King's great grief, even to the shedding of tears. The election had cost him 300,000 francs in bribes to the cardinals. And being in great doubt of another pope who would favour him he gave up all thought of going to war.

At this same time the *Sieur de Martonie*, a gentleman of *Perigord*, with whom we had been at law on the King's behalf, and whom we thought we had obliged in several ways, so far forgot himself as to challenge our son to a duel. All the authorities on duelling thought the *Sieur de la Martonie* behaved very ill. On the other hand, our son bore himself with so much discretion and frankness that His Majesty and all competent judges of such affairs, held that he had failed in nothing, neither in courage nor in good sense. In short, his antagonist was taken a prisoner to *Fort l'Esveque* by the King's command and was in danger of losing his head, while our son was only confined to his lodging and soon after set completely at liberty. While he was in confinement he was visited by a crowd of friends of both religions and of the highest quality. It seemed as if this occurrence, however unfortunate, was sent to show how highly the budding worth of this youth was already recognized. It was widely

¹ Alexander di Medici.

noticed, however, that, contrary to custom, our son was set at liberty, with leave to go where he would, without any formal reconciliation with his enemy. Some people thought it strange that we should be left with this thorn in our side. As for his antagonist the King granted him his life after a little while, ordering him, as a punishment, to serve for two years in Hungary against the Turk, which however he never did.

When our son saw that the levy of the three regiments came to nothing he determined to ask permission to offer himself for service in the Low Countries as a private person. The King willingly granted his request and, when he came to receive His Majesty's commands, spoke very kindly to him and gave him leave of absence to say good-bye to us. The truth is we were more willing he should start on this journey because we saw how he fretted at idleness, and that he was almost ready to die of chagrin whenever a chance of proving his worth escaped him. We had been quite afraid at the time of the siege of Ostend when we were obliged to keep him with us for really important matters. . . .

I left my poor son on the point of embarking at Dieppe on his way to the Low Countries. The two armies of Prince Maurice and the Marquis of Spinola passed the whole summer entrenched face to face, scarcely two hundred paces apart in places and daily saluting the dawn with their cannon, one before Sluys and the other before Bruges. But nothing else was done. My son was weary of inaction although he seized on every chance, however small, of risking himself. He fell so ill of a tertiary fever that his friends were alarmed. In September, weak though he was, he followed the army to Friesland whither Spinola had gone on leaving his entrenchments, and whither Prince Maurice had followed him. Spinola's first exploit was the taking of Olderzed, a small place; then Linghen, a larger one where the people had shown great patience in holding out in the hope of succour, but which was poorly defended by the garrison. This

capture threatened Groningen, an important town. William of Nassau, governor of the province, threw his troops into it to relieve the siege, and our son, whom he held in great affection, went with him. On the 9th of October Prince Maurice left his camp with all his cavalry and part of his infantry to capture the cavalry of the Marquis of Trivulzio. As ill-luck would have it our son could not go with him, because two days previously, while chasing an enemy convoy, he had been hurt on the ankle by a kick from a horse he was leading. It set up a great bruise and inflammation and though he was determined to be carried on this expedition his friends would not let him go. The fight was very uncertain, death and flight on both sides, and while some won honour others only won disgrace. However much our son tried to hide his feelings in his letters, we could read between the lines how vexed he was to miss the very first affair of any importance. We could easily see that we should not see him home again until he had had another chance.

On the 22nd October, while he was still laid up with his hurt, news came that Prince Maurice intended to attack Geldern on the following night. Overjoyed at the prospect of a better action than the one he had missed, our son determined to take part in it, in spite of his lameness. To make sure of getting there he secured a place in the wagon which was loaded with the petards for the attack on the town. La Grise, who had been bred as a page by M. du Plessis, went with him. They came before Geldern on October 23rd at dawn of day. The curtain (of the town wall) was lit up with torches and the fire of arquebuses. This, however, did not deter them. The engineers advanced. Captain Sault led the first dozen men armed with pistols and cuirasses. Our son, who esteemed the Captain very highly, ranked himself as his soldier for that day and went with him at the head of the little troop. The first petard exploded at the first barrier but only blackened it. The second made an opening for them to get in, but not without some confusion, because

the second petard had its *pont* made specially for the town gate. As the engineer went back for the third he cried, "Make way" so as to leave himself room to pass. Some of the less bold thought he meant to shout "Retreat" and so left the position empty. Our son, at the edge of the town ditch, waved his sword and shouted to rally them, but at that very moment he was shot in the chest and, pierced to the heart, he fell without a sound. La Grise, who supported him, was struck by the same shot and was mortally wounded. Our son was borne away immediately by the rest in their retreat.

Happy end for him, born in the Church of God, nourished in His fear, noted for his worth while yet so young, lost in a righteous quarrel and in an honourable action. But for us the beginning of a sorrow which can only end in death, with no other consolation but what the fear and the grace of God can give us while we chew the bitter cud of our grief. . . . ✓

And here it is fitting that my book should end. It was written for him, to describe the pilgrimage of our lives, and now God has willed that his life should end so soon and so sweetly. And truly did I not fear M. du Plessis' grief, whose love for me grows as my sorrow grows, I would fain not survive him.

AN AFTERWORD

Du PLESSIS outlived his wife seventeen years, but he was not left either alone nor in idleness, as the very numerous letters written both by him and to him which have been preserved, abundantly prove. His daughters, his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren surrounded him with family affection and the protestant Churches held his name in honour to the end. For the first fifteen years after his wife's death he lived on at Saumur, whose governorship was the meagre reward of his years of devotion, but in 1621 even this was taken from him. The huguenots were once again at war, and though it is little likely that du Plessis' loyalty was doubted, yet Louis XIII. preferred to see the city in catholic hands. The old governor left his home for thirty years and went to end his days at his château of la Forest sur Sèvre. His last days were described by his secretary in a tiny book, and the final glimpse of the old man can fittingly be seen through eyes no less admiring than those of the chronicler of his active years. Those who have so far followed the fortunes of a huguenot family may like to see them gathered together for the last time.

"By a premonition sent from God M. du Plessis wrote a codicil on the 14th Oct., in which for the peace of the family and for the edification of those who survived him, he explained his last wishes, but owing to various interruptions he was not able to sign the document before the 5th Nov. 'Now,' said he, when it was done, 'I am freed from a great responsibility and there is nothing left for me to do but die.' And in fact he took to his bed the following day, sick of a continuous fever. The doctors warned us on Thursday the 9th of the month

that his condition was such that, humanly speaking, he would never rise again. God left him with us yet forty-eight hours which he so wholly devoted to thinking of his salvation that he scarcely heeded anything else. On this 9th Nov. Madame de Villarnoul, his eldest daughter, came to his bedside and asked if he would have a minister to speak words of comfort to him. The minister of the neighbouring church came, on her invitation, to warn him of his approaching end and to prepare him to submit to God's will. But it is worthy of note that the pastor was so troubled himself with the sad news that he blurted it out without that circumlocution which it is usual to employ on such occasions. M. du Plessis was in nowise disturbed, but with a countenance full of assurance replied: 'Is this truth? I am content.' A little later his daughters and their husbands came about his bed. In a firm voice he gave his blessing to his daughters and his sons-in-law bidding them live in unity. Then praying God to confirm his benediction he blessed his grandchildren both present and absent, his nephew and his nephew's wife, his household and his servants, not forgetting his doctor who had always attended him faithfully and carefully in all his illnesses, even in this last one. He charged the pastor to write to Madame des Nozers, the late Madame du Plessis' daughter by her first marriage, a letter bearing his blessing to her and her whole family. Soon after he bethought him of Madame de L'Isle, daughter of Mme de Villarnoul, regretting that he could not see her and her children to bless them also. On those of his grandsons who had studied or were studying he called down the blessings of heaven above and the earth beneath. Many were the words he spoke, not only in his own tongue, but in Greek and Latin and Hebrew, quoting the Scriptures freely and sometimes Aristotle and Pindar. When Friday the 10th Nov. came he opened the day with the prayer, '*Domine aperi labia mea ut annunciem laudem tuam,*' nor did he linger very long after this."

MILLE DU PLESSIS' LETTER TO HER SON
PHILIPPE DE MORNAY
IN DEDICATION OF HER BOOK

MY SON,

God is my witness that He filled me, even before your birth, with the hope that you would be born to be His servant, and in some measure this should be an earnest of His grace, and an admonition to you to do your duty. To this intent your father and I have laboured to bring you up in His fear, making you suckle it with your milk so far as lay in our power; and furthermore to render you more apt we took pains to give you a good education. In this, thanks be to Him, we have met with fair success, so that you may not only *live* but may even be a *light* in His Church. Now when I behold you ready to set out to see the world for yourself, to learn the ways of men and the state of nations, not being able to follow you any longer with my eyes I shall still follow you with the same solicitude, and pray that the same teaching will also follow with you wheresoever you go, so that you may grow in the fear and love of God; may gain profit from all things good through knowledge of Him; may strengthen yourself in your vocation for His service to which He has called you; and may repay by winning glory and honour for Him everything which He has given you hitherto or shall give you hereafter. It is His gift that you are born in His Church, a gift denied to so many nations and to so many great men. My son, give praise reverently for this privilege of being born a Christian. He willed you to be born in the full light of the Church, freed from the Kingdom of darkness, and from the tyranny of the Antichrist who has held so many nations in the mists of error for so many centuries. The great ones of the earth, the princes of this generation for the most part still lie in the mire. Therefore give praise once more with me for this mercy, for this special care which God showed you in that He freed you from this apostasy which has usurped His power over so many nations for so many long years. But you He caused to be born of a father whom He has chosen for His servant in these days now present, and who will continue

to serve Him for His glory's sake ; a father who dedicated you to His service from your childhood ; who educated you in piety and doctrine as befitted your years, and who, to sum up, has left nothing undone, both by earnest prayer to God and by unfailing care in your instruction to render you fit, when the day comes, to do His work.

Bethink you that by these means God may will to bring you to great deeds ; bethink you that you, in your turn, may be an instrument for that restoration of His Church which cannot tarry much longer. Lift up your soul to this end and be sure, O my son, that God will help you ; be sure that in seeking Him you will never fail to meet Him coming to meet you ; be sure that in striving for His glory you will win your own in greater measure than the whole world can give or even promise. But fear also His judgments if you neglect Him, or if you are ungrateful for the grace He bestows on you ; for mercy disdained returns in rebuke, and the more special a blessing is so much the more is our disdain or our abuse of it meet for punishment. You are yet young, my son, and in youth the mind is full of fancies, but remember the words of the Psalmist :

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way : even by ruling himself after thy word." (Ps. 119 : v. 9.) And be not led astray by persons who would turn you to right or to left but say again with the Psalmist :

"I will dwell with those who keep thy laws ; thy laws O Lord will be my counsel."¹

But so that you may not be without a guide I herewith give you one, made with my own hand, to keep you company, the which is your father's example, and which I adjure you both to keep always before your eyes, and to follow it. To ensure this I have been at pains to write out for you all that I have been able to learn about his life, in spite of the unhappiness of the times which has so often interrupted our companionship, in suchwise that you may at least know the grace which God has shown him and the zeal and affection with which he has used it, so that you, in your turn, may hope for like assistance whensoever you resolve to serve Him with your whole heart. I am ailing and it is not to be expected that God will leave me long in this world. Keep this writing in memory of me. And when I am gone from you, in God's own time, I want you to finish that which I have begun to write concerning our lives. But above all, my son, I shall know that you will be thinking of me whenever tidings reach me that

¹ The above verse cannot be traced as quoted by Mlle du Plessis.

you, wheresoever you may be, are serving God and following in your father's steps. I shall gladly go down to the tomb whenever God calls me, if I can see you on the certain way to advance His glory, whether it be in aiding your father in his holy work so long as God spares him (and I pray he may yet have long years to serve God and be a guide to you through the ways of this world), or whether he lives again in you, should it be God's will that you survive him.

To conclude. I commend your sisters to you. Show them by loving them well that you do love, and will always love, your mother. Remember that, young as you are, were God to take us away you would have to be a father to them. I pray God, my son, that He will grant that you all live in His fear and in love of one another. In this confidence I give you my blessing, and with my whole heart implore God to bless my blessing for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, and that He will pour out His Holy Spirit upon you.

Written at Saumur, this 25th of April 1595.

Your very good mother,

CHARLOTTE ARBALESTE.

LETTER FROM M^{LE} DU PLESSIS TO
M. DE LA COURT

M. DE LA COURT,

I beg you to be so good as to buy for me, through the kind offices of Madame de la Court, your wife, two little caps for children first and second size, and to have two pairs of leading-strings also made of very fine white serge, one to be lined with white satin and the other with a thin taffeta; there should be a cap to match as well. I also want four dozen laces "de la chambre de comptes,"¹ the best, and a hundred and fifty needles of all sizes. Get a velvet bonnet made for me to wear with two gauze nets spangled with gold and silver, and two satin caps "de cornettes" well made and turned back in front so that the gauze is not hidden. I also want two wigs of light chestnut hair, one for wearing with a cap "de cornettes" which should be very low and flat in the middle, and the other for wearing with a gauze coif. I beg you to be so very kind as

¹ Would this be analogous to red tape of Treasury quality?

to do all these things for me as quickly as you can. They should be put in a box well corded and given to M. le Gras, who will convey them to Bordeaux. I have already written to him about it.

I commend me to your good offices and also to Madame de la Court's, and pray God to keep you safe.

Your loving and good friend,

CHARLOTTE ARBALESTE.

NÉRAC, Oct. 17, 1587.

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